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Arab-Israeli Talks

PLO's Sha'th Notes Progress in Talks

NC0712120093 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1050 GMT 7 Dec 93

[Text] Cairo, 7 Dec (MENA)—The Palestinian-Israeli Civilian and Security Affairs Committees resumed their meetings in Cairo and al-'Arish for the third day running this week in a bid to reach an agreement on a number of issues that continue to represent a dispute between the two sides concerning the Gaza-Jericho accord.

Dr. Nabil Sha'th, political adviser to Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat and head of the Palestinian side to the Gaza-Jericho Committee, has told MENA that some progress has been achieved with regard to a number of topics related to the handover of authority from the Israeli side to the Palestinian side. He said that other points are still the subject of dispute.

Sha'th said that he and his Israeli counterpart General Amnon Shahaq on Thursday [9 December] will exchange the draft agreement concerning the Israeli withdrawal from Gaza and Jericho and the handover of authority to the Palestinian side, although there are still points that have not been agreed upon. He said that the draft will contain each side's viewpoints with regard to the implementation of the Gaza-Jericho accord.

Dr. Sha'th has categorically denied that an agreement has been reached with the Israeli side to postpone the signing of the implementation of the Gaza-Jericho accord, scheduled to take place on 13 December, for several weeks. Sha'th noted that the signing date is contingent on the two sides' agreement on points that are still under discussion.

Dr. Sha'th said that the two sides are making intensive efforts to complete the discussion of the points listed on the agenda of the two committees before 13 December.

Meanwhile, knowledgeable Palestinian sources in Cairo said that there has recently been some progress in the field of the transfer of civilian authority from the Israeli side to the Palestinian side. This field involves the sectors of education, awqaf, agriculture, and taxes. The two sides agreed to delineate the tasks and the size of the Palestinian (?police force) in the Gaza and Jericho areas.

The sources added that there has also been some progress regarding the definition of the area of Jericho, which was a topic of dispute between the two sides. However, this issue has not been finally resolved. Progress has been reported concerning the issue of crossings that will link Gaza with Jericho and will in turn link them with Egypt, Jordan, the West Bank, and Israel.

The sources said that there are still points of disagreement, including the release of Palestinian detainees held in the Israeli prisons and detention camps.

The Civilian and Security Affairs Committees are expected to end their meetings on Thursday.

Palestinian Affairs

Officials Cited on 'Arafat-Rabin Meeting

JN0812112993 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 8 Dec 93 pp 1,10

[By JORDAN TIMES staff reporter Lamis K. Andoni]

[Text] Amman—The Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) is seeking a meeting next week between Palestinian leader Yasir 'Arafat and Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin to overcome obstacles impeding the implementation of a historic accord signed in Washington three months ago.

Palestinian officials in Amman and Tunis said that contacts were underway to ensure a Palestinian-Israeli summit on Dec. 12, a day prior to the agreed upon date for the beginning of Israeli troop withdrawal from Gaza and Jericho.

They said that Israel seemed interested in such a meeting as it became clear that the Cairo negotiations were leading nowhere. "The negotiations have become futile. The sticking points are very serious and require top-level political decisions on both sides," said one PLO official in Tunis.

The venue of the Israeli-Palestinian summit has not been decided but some Palestinian officials did not rule out that Mr. Rabin might go to Tunis, the base of the PLO, to meet Mr. 'Arafat.

The PLO leader has urged the U.S. to intervene to pressure Israel to abide by the agreed upon withdrawal date, but Palestinian officials said that U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher supported Mr. Rabin's position during his meeting with Mr. 'Arafat in Amman on Monday [13 December].

Mr. Christopher and Mr. 'Arafat will hold another round of talks in Tunis on Friday.

What Mr. Christopher might deliver to help ease the rising tensions are assurances by Mr. Rabin concerning measures to curb Israeli settlers' attacks on Palestinians.

Mr. 'Arafat, according to his aides, sought such assurances during his meeting with Mr. Christopher. The PLO leader was said to be infuriated by doubts expressed by Israel and some Western governments about the PLO's ability to maintain order following the expected Israeli withdrawal.

"'Arafat is annoyed by the way he is pressured to maintain order even prior to the transfer of power while there are no similar pressures on Rabin to do so now with the Israeli settlers," said a Fatah official in Tunis.

Mr. 'Arafat has come under fire by many Palestinians for condemning attacks by Palestinians against Israeli settlers while he does not seem to be able to do much about violence against Palestinians.

The PLO leader was also expected to meet with Israeli Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres in Granada, where the two will be attending a United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) gathering for Israeli and Palestinian intellectuals.

"A meeting between Mr. 'Arafat and Mr. Peres will help but an Israeli-Palestinian summit is crucial to salvage the (peace) process," the official said.

The Israelis have suggested a two to three weeks delay citing Palestinian unpreparedness and the vagueness of provisions of the accord.

The Palestinian officials said that the delay could be inevitable if Israel insisted. "It takes the two sides' approval to implement the accord," the Tunis based official noted.

Mr. 'Arafat has insisted on the Dec. 13 deadline partly because he cannot afford to accept a postponement and partly to pressure Israel to address some of the disputed points.

Officials said that control over the crossing points remains a key issue.

Egypt has said that it supported Palestinian control over crossing points between Egypt and Gaza while there were Israeli statements indicating readiness for joint control over bridges between the West Bank and Jordan.

Mr. Christopher will meet Mr. 'Arafat again in Tunis on Friday, but Palestinian officials have strong doubts that the U.S. will exert any meaningful pressure on Israel.

The PLO expects Israel to take some steps on Dec. 13 such as a beginning of redeployment of Israeli forces in Gaza to prove its commitment to the accord.

"Such a step will not be enough. After all there are fundamental differences over the issue of withdrawal from Gaza," said the PLO official.

While Israel insists on redeployment of troops in Gaza the PLO wants a total Israeli withdrawal.

Delegates View 7 Dec Meeting With Christopher

JN0712214693 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Arabic 1530 GMT 7 Dec 93

[Sa'id Mu'addi report; from the "With The Events" program]

[Text] U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher's meeting this evening with a delegation of Palestinian figures falls within the framework of the U.S. secretary's Middle Eastern shuttle tour. The U.S. secretary met yesterday with PLO Chairman Yasir 'Arafat in Amman. Secretary Christopher refused to make any statement to journalists after the meeting. However, Dennis Ross, coordinator of bilateral talks, said the meeting was good.

The Palestinian figures that attended this meeting included Faysal al-Husayni, Ghassan al-Khatib, Dr. Zakariya al-Agha, and Dr. Hanan 'Ashrawi, spokeswoman for the Palestinian delegation, who said after the meeting:

[Begin 'Ashrawi recording] The discussion was frank and constructive. Our discussion covered three main topics.

First, we discussed the situation, the deteriorating situation in the occupied territories and the settlers' acts, as well as the need to stop these acts and release the detainees.

We also discussed the negotiating process and the need to implement the [Gaza-Jericho] agreement as soon as possible, and the need for stands that agree with the spirit of the phase. We also discussed the need to respect the timeframe set for the agreement.

In addition, we discussed economic issues and the need to implement the integrated economic agreement as soon as possible. [end recording]

The U.S. secretary urged the Palestinian side to continue the negotiations within the framework of the established committees in order to give credibility to the Palestinian-Israeli agreement and improve the condition of residents in the territories. The U.S. secretary also asked the Palestinians and Israelis to stop violence in the territories.

[Begin 'Ashrawi recording] Secretary Christopher was interested in the quick implementation and the effective implementation which can bring about a genuine change on the life of the Palestinian individual, put an end to violence in the occupied territories, and change the tragic conditions under which the Palestinian people are living. [end recording]

Regarding the resumption of the bilateral talks in Washington, Dr. 'Ashrawi said:

[Begin recording] ['Ashrawi] This was discussed in Amman. The talks may resume soon.

[Reporter] Has there been an agreement to postpone the date for implementing the agreement on 13 December?

['Ashrawi] There is no agreement on any postponement. We stress that respecting the date is means respect for the credibility of the agreement. [end recording]

The Palestinian delegation asked Secretary Christopher to intervene to overcome the obstacles facing the Israeli-Palestinian agreement. Ghassan al-Khatib says:

[Begin recording] [al-Khatib] The Palestinian delegation asked the guest U.S. secretary to exert good offices and intervene with the Israeli Government to persuade it to change its negotiating stands and bring them into harmony with the agreement. We also asked the secretary to

intervene in an effort to persuade the Israeli Government to make initiatives to improve the situation on the ground and ease the pressure on the Palestinian public. Emphasis was specifically placed on the need to release the Palestinian detainees in order to create good atmospheres to make peace.

[Mu'addi] Has the Palestinian delegation received any response from the U.S. secretary?

[Al-Khatib] Yes, regarding U.S. intervention, the secretary said this could only be done only if the two parties ask him to intervene but the Israeli side has not asked him to do so, and thus he cannot intervene officially, although during his visit he is trying to influence the two parties to make them implement the agreement, on 13 December if possible.

Regarding the detainees issue, the U.S. secretary said he is exerting efforts and has raised this question with the Israeli prime minister, as well as the U.S. concern over the growing violence in the region. In that respect, we noted the danger emanating from the settlers' acts and violations of the law. We demanded that the Israeli Army play a major role to prevent the settlers from carrying out their repeated attacks against the Palestinian people. [end recording]

'Ashrawi Views Meeting Christopher

LD0712163493 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1400 GMT 7 Dec 93

[Text] The meeting between Secretary of State Warren Christopher and the Palestinian delegation to the peace talks ended a short time ago. The violence is an outcome of the tension in the region and anxious anticipation of 13 December, delegation spokeswoman Hanan 'Ashrawi said. Tali Katzenelson reports from Jerusalem:

[Begin recording] [Katzenelson] The convoy of vehicles came to a halt outside the U.S. Consulate in East Jerusalem at 1436 [1236 GMT] and Warren Christopher alighted from one of the vehicles, accompanied by Dennis Ross, Edward Djerejian, and Sam Lewis. A minute later another convoy stopped at the same spot and the heads of the Palestinian delegation to the peace talks, headed by Faysal al-Husayni, entered the building. When 'Ashrawi came out of the meeting she smiled at the journalists and said it was a very successful meeting.

['Ashrawi, in English] Secretary Christopher understood the need to move as fast and as effectively as possible, and that this is the only way to meet the deteriorating conditions as....

[Katzenelson, translates the above and continues] 'Ashrawi said they discussed the need to maintain the original framework of the agreement which the Palestinians regard as a test of the sides' commitment to the Declaration of Principles. She said that in their view, the original 13 December date must be observed. What might affect the implementation of that deadline, the growing violence, was also raised, but the Palestinians do not think that they have to change anything in order to reduce the violence.

['Ashrawi, in English] We explained the implications, we explained the dangers inherent in having the settlers in the middle of a population that is unharmed....

[Katzenelson, translates the above and continues] 'Ashrawi said they told Christopher that none of us want violence, we all are interested in the success of the agreement. The violence is due to the current situation, which calls for a drastic immediate change, but she added in answer to a question: We did not discuss what we Palestnians have to do to reduce the violence. That issue, to tell the truth, was not raised at all, she said. [end recording]

More on 'Ashrawi's Remarks

LD0712175793 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1605 GMT 7 Dec 93

[Text] After their meeting today with U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher, the Palestinians said that the agreement of principles must be implemented as soon as possible, and that it should be honored by concluding the negotiations by 13 December. Dr. Hanan 'Ashrawi said that three issues were discussed in the meeting with Christopher: the situation in the territories, the release of prisoners, and the implementation of the agreement. Our correspondent Moti Amir reports:

[Begin recording] [Amir] A delegation of 10 Palestinians, headed by Faysal al-Husayni, met this afternoon with U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher. The meeting lasted some 90 minutes and was held at the U.S. Consulate in East Jerusalem. On the American side, the meeting was also attended by Dennis Ross and Sam Lewis. At the end of the meeting, the Americans chose not to address the numerous reporters.

Dr. Hanan 'Ashrawi told reporters that discussions focused on the situation in the territories, the escalation of settler violence and the need to curb it, and the essential need to immediately release masses of Palestinian prisoners. Regarding the Cairo talks, 'Ashrawi stressed that Warren Christopher understands the importance of honoring the agreement of principles and meeting the dates determined in it.

['Ashrawi, in English] Well, they do recognize the need for immediate implementation. We talked about the need to maintain the credibility of the negotiations and of the Declaration of Principles, that we see this as a test for the commitment of both sides to the Declaration of Principles and to what they signed upon. And Secretary Christopher understood the need to move as fast and as effectively as possible, and that this is the only way to meet the deteriorating conditions as to create real changes by beginning implementation as soon as possible.

[Amir translates and continues] Dr. 'Ashrawi added that the Palestinians asked Christopher to work for the implementation of the commitment made to the Palestinians and to grant them the financial aid needed for the establishment of autonomy in the territories. [end recording]

Al-Husayni Queried on Meeting

TA0712162993 Tel Aviv Educational Television Network in Hebrew 1500 GMT 7 Dec 93

[Interview with Faysal al-Husayni, head of the Fatah Movement Command in the West Bank, by Yisra'el Segal, in the Jerusalem studio "shortly after his meeting with U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher"—live]

[Text] [Segal] Was the meeting good? Did you accomplish anything? Was a breakthrough made?

[Al-Husayni] I can say that the meeting was good, but I cannot say there was a breakthrough.

[Segal] Who will be in control of the border crossings, the Jordan River bridges, for example? Has a compromise been made on that?

[Al-Husayni] To my regret, not yet. We have a serious problem with this, and we have not yet reached a decision.

[Segal] What about the territory of Jericho?

[Al-Husayni] If you are referring to our meeting with Mr. Christopher, we did not conclude anything. We discussed the issue in general. This was not the place for negotiations.

[Segal] What was the main message Warren Christopher conveyed to you regarding the negotiations with Israel?

[Al-Husayni] I can say that the Americans are very interested in having us reach decisions before 13 December. They see that the situation is deteriorating and they want to fix it. So far, however, they made no offers.

[Segal] Tell me please, there was a brutal murder on Haharsina Hill last night; do you condemn this murder?

[Al-Husayni] Unfortunately, it was not the only incident. Last week, people were killed on the Palestinian side as well. This can also be called murder.

[Segal] So, do you condemn it or not, Mr. al-Husayni?

[Al-Husayni] I can say that I regret every drop of blood that is shed. We must stop this bloody cycle, move forward, and do what should be done, and begin the implementation [previous word in English] of the agreement.

[Segal] Mr. al-Husayni, are you at all in control of the territories, or does Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] have the power?

[Al-Husayni] I believe no one controls the area: The Israelis do not, we do not, Hamas does not, and that is why there is no security. This is the message we want the Israelis to understand. If we have full governing powers, we will have full control and there will be full security. If, however, we lack in governing powers, there will be a lack of control and security.

[Segal] In view of the meetings you had today with the secretary of state and others, do you believe the implementation of the agreement will indeed begin on 13 December?

[Al-Husayni] If the Israelis realize that security will only follow full control, which will be the result of full governing authority, I am certain we will begin everything on 13 December, and peace will really come faster than anyone thought.

Sha'th Denies Suspension of Gaza-Jericho Talks

NC0712185293 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1800 GMT 7 Dec 93

[Text] Cairo, 7 Dec (MENA)—Dr. Nabil Sha'th, political adviser to Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat and head of the Palestinian delegation to the Palestinian-Israeli committee for the implementation of the Gaza-Jericho agreement, has denied reports about the suspension of the committee's talks.

In remarks to MENA today, Dr. Sha'th noted that the Palestinian and Israeli delegations are working separately and in the presence of all their members to prepare draft papers regarding the protocol of implementing the Gaza-Jericho Agreement. The draft papers, he added, will outline the points of agreement and disagreement between the two sides as identified through the work of the Gaza-Jericho expanded committee and its subcommittees.

Dr. Sha'th added that the two sides will exchange their drafts tomorrow, Wednesday, in time to comply with the deadline set for signing the protocol on 13 December. He added: We expect to solve the remaining problems before the conclusion of the meetings of the expanded Palestinian-Israeli committee scheduled for Thursday.

Responsible Palestinian sources expect Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat and Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin to arrive in Cairo on Sunday to sign the Gaza-Jericho Agreement should the two sides agree on the draft papers on the protocol.

Report of Dismissal of Fatah Gaza Heads Denied

TA0712144693 Jerusalem AL-NAHAR in Arabic 7 Dec 93 pp 1, 7

[By 'Imad al-Ifranji]

[Text] Gaza—PLO officials in Gaza have denied a Israel Radio report about the dismissal of three key Fatah officials on orders from Palestinian leader Yasir 'Arafat

because of their involvement in the assassination of attorney Muhammad Hashim Abu-Sha'ban about three months ago in Gaza.

Israel Radio claimed that PLO Chairman Yasir 'Arafat issued an order dismissing Abu-'Ali Shahin, Muhammad Dahlan, and Rashid Abu-Shubak—Fatah officials in the Gaza Strip—because they were involved in the murder of attorney Abu-Sha'ban.

Officials at the PLO office in Gaza said that they contacted PLO headquarters in Tunis by telephone and that Abu-Mahir Ghunaym, the official responsible for Fatah in the occupied territories, strongly denied the report.

Ghunaym said that these reports were being disseminated by hostile elements to create confusion among Palestinians and divert attention from the real killers. He stressed that the three officials were still in their posts.

Fatah officials in Gaza also denied these reports and said that Muhammad Dahlan phoned them and emphasized that he had not received any dismissal order and that he was pursuing his work as usual.

Sami Abu-Samahdanah, a Fatah leader in Gaza, accused hostile parties of concocting these allegations.

Hamas Spokesman Views Negotiations, Struggle

NC0712145093 Beirut AL-DIYAR in Arabic 27 Nov 93 p 7

[Interview with 'Umar Ibrahim Ghawshah, official spokesman of Hamas, the Islamic Resistance Movement, by Muwaffaq Madani; in Amman; date not given]

[Text] [Madani] Did the Gaza-Jericho agreement surprise you?

[Ghawshah] We were not surprised.

[Madani] You knew about it?

[Ghawshah] I am not saying that we knew about the secret negotiations. The one thing that we never expected, though, was to see 'Arafat reach this low a level on the issue of the Palestinian people's rights. That was clear to us and we were not surprised by it [sentence as published]. When we last met him in Sudan earlier this year, 'Arafat was very eager to coerce Hamas' [Islamic Resistance Movement] recognition that the PLO is the legitimate and sole representative. We were just as eager not to give 'Arafat this recognition because we knew that he would misuse it. He did, in fact, misuse it when he relinquished all of Palestine. He gave the Jews the right to establish their state on all Palestinian soil and exploited the prominence we gave him for 20 years as the legitimate and sole representative of the Palestinian people.

[Madani] Are you opposed to the Gaza-Jericho agreement?

[Ghawshah] Hamas is, in fact, opposed to the Madrid conference, the proposed settlement based on self-government, and to the Gaza-Jericho agreement, which is limited self-government on a part of the territory that represents two percent of Palestine's land and which will increase in time to include the West Bank. These declared principles do not give anything to the Palestinian people. All the principal issues have been postponed to eliminate them—Jerusalem and sovereignty. This agreement wants the heart of the intifadah. If the intifadah is stopped—God forbid—then the doors will be opened wide for Jewish emigration from the Soviet Union. An active operation to build more settlements in East Jerusalem was clearly announced yesterday.

Our stand vis-a-vis this agreement is decisive and clear. This is the political stand. The principled one I spoke about is that we do not believe in the first place in sitting with this enemy who has usurped our lands. We do not agree to negotiating with him because merely sitting with him means recognizing him. The Arabs gave him de facto recognition by merely sitting with him. We noticed that half the world, that is China and India, have recognized him after Madrid.

At the same time, we believe that the Gaza-Jericho agreement bears within itself the seeds of its destruction. We are almost satisfied because the plot—which is targeting us and in which 'Arafat is pushing toward a collision with Hamas to uproot Islamic fundamentalism in Palestine, as Rabin and Clinton want—is so complicated as not to give 'Arafat the time or the possibility to harm Hamas. Another reason is that there are great contradictions and differences in the Gaza-Jericho agreement and there are problems inside the 'Arafat camp, Fatah itself, and its allies. It is our view that these will drown 'Arafat in the end and he will not be able to overcome them.

[Madani] It is being said that the intifadah dropped to 40 percent after the agreement.

[Ghawshah] That is not accurate. It would be accurate to say that the intifadah has weakened since Madrid. In practice, 'Arafat issued secret orders to stop the intifadah when he ordered the olive branches to be put on the rifles of the occupation soldiers on the eve of Madrid. Fatah has, in fact, stopped its intifadah and struggle activities since that time. 'Arafat froze all the means that could lead to an effective intifadah in the time between Madrid and the Gaza-Jericho agreement. We noticed how he dismantled many of the institutes inside [the occupied territories], froze the intifadah committee before the Gaza-Jericho agreement, and weakened the financial support for many parties.

Now we say that the intifadah has weakened since Madrid. But the Islamic movement—as represented by Hamas, a number of other forces, and some Fatah elements that did not accept this capitulationist concession made by 'Arafat—are still carrying out the economic and struggle process. It is our own assessment that

the struggle operations against the Israeli enemy in the period between Madrid and today are more than the ones carried out in the years that preceded it. The occupation soldiers and the settlers are the targets. We in Hamas really want to shake the foundations of this occupation more than we want to send thousands and thousands into the streets and have dozens of them killed and hundreds wounded. The fewer victims there are and the more the enemy is blamed is the appropriate way to deal with the Zionist enemy.

[Madani] Then what is, in Hamas view, the alternative to the Gaza-Jericho agreement and the negotiations?

[Ghawshah] We in Hamas have always been asked about the alternative. We have been asked what is the alternative to Madrid and what is the alternative to the Gaza-Jericho agreement. We have chosen, declared, and explained the alternative. The alternative is the jihad, the struggle, and more jihad. These are not tied to the life of Yasir 'Arafat or to the life of 'Umar Ibrahim Ghawshah. In the long term, the time factor has to be exploited in the liberation formula. The continuity of this flame in the Arab-Islamic plan that exists in more than one country has to find a counterpart in Palestine. The big plot now is to snuff out this flame inside Palestine in order to affect the rising Arab-Islamic plan in the other countries because the intifadah is casting its strong rays on the Islamic world and even on the world itself.

Struggle, then, is the alternative chosen by any people whose land is occupied, from which it is expelled, and whose sons are imprisoned. There is no argument that there is an imbalance but whoever said that a fair agreement can be signed under the imbalance in power? Such an agreement would be one of submission and capitulation as is happening now.

We noticed that they tried in Taba to speak a little louder about total withdrawal. The advice of Mubarak and those behind him was to call for secret talks in Cairo in order to overstep the issue of comprehensive withdrawal. This is because the Declaration of Principles indeed does not provide for total withdrawal. It only provides for the redeployment of forces. The 'Arafat group tried to delude the Palestinian people that this meant withdrawal. I said at the beginning that these contradictions in the Gaza-Jericho agreement will cause it to fail, and one of the main causes for its failure will be the fact that there is no provision for total withdrawal.

I emphasize once again that the alternative is jihad, struggle, the continuation of the intifadah, and solidarity of the Islamic and Arab nations with the Palestinian people. This is not impossible. It might be difficult, but not impossible. The faithful youths in Palestine are ready to shoulder the major burden. Any observer can now see that the Palestinian people have begun undertaking suicidal operations which have shaken the Rabin entity. These suicidal operations will increase in the future and become more painful to the Zionist occupation. We would like to benefit from the experience of the Lebanese people, who were able to uproot the [U.S.] Marines [previous word in English], the French, and the Jews from Lebanon. They fought and sacrificed. The Palestinian people are experienced in struggle and jihad, and are ready to die willingly to defeat this enemy.

[Madani] During the recent meeting of the rejectionist forces in Damascus, a discussion took place between Hamas and the 10 factions which produced no results because of differences of opinion....

[Ghawshah, interrupting] That is correct.

[Madani] Particularly on the future of the PLO. How do you explain Hamas's position on the establishment of the rejectionist front? Is it against the existence of the PLO, or for maintaining it?

[Ghawshah] The formula of the 10 factions was agreed upon by the factions opposed to the Madrid Conference more than a year ago. After the Gaza-Jericho agreement, it was found that there is a need to develop this formula and raise its roof, as it was not sufficient to confront the Gaza-Jericho plot.

There were several proposals. The Hamas Movement was of the opinion that by recognizing the existence of the Jewish state in Palestine, 'Arafat has, in fact, dropped the element of liberation from the Liberation Organization. Giving up this territory meant that there was no more territory to liberate. 'Arafat implicitly agreed to turn this organization into a political party. This political party is responsible for implementing the autonomy. We notice that the 'Arafat group and the organization are preparing themselves to take on this role. Therefore, there is a vacuum among the Palestinian people. This vacuum is felt more among the 4 million Palestinians living abroad (the refugees) and who have no place in the Gaza-Jericho agreement. We believe, as we have suggested to our brothers in the 10 factions, that a provisional Palestinian leadership be established. At this time, we say that we are the ones who represent the Palestinian people. We believe that the actual leadership must be elected by the Palestinian people. We think that the Palestinian people can choose their leadership by themselves, irrespective of what percentage they gave to Hamas. This is not what matters. What matters to us is for the leadership to be elected freely.

We are not against the PLO. But let us see what the future of this organization is, in light of the agreement. Will the agreement survive? Will the Arab states continue to recognize it as an organization? Will it continue to have embassies? We said let us keep the door open. Let us establish this provisional leadership now, and we will see whether this provisional leadership will become the leadership of the Palestinian people in the future or whether the PLO will survive and have a future. The other opinion was that we must immediately withdraw legitimacy from 'Arafat and establish ourselves as the organization. There is an opinion in the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine that we are a

national front and should work through the PLO institutions to make the necessary changes. After some discussion, we agreed on 30 October on two points: The chosen political formula and the political program.

[Madani] Did you participate in the discussion?

[Ghawshah] Yes, during two meetings. It remained to work out the mechanism. As regards the political formula, we agreed to call the leadership "the Palestinian National and Islamic Alliance."

Among other things, the political program approved by the 10 factions rejected the Gaza-Jericho agreement, rejected recognition of Israel, stressed continuation of the intifadah and jihad operations, and considered the Palestine question to be the cause of all Arabs and Muslims.

Regrettably, we noticed two days later that the brothers in the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine [PFLP] and the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine [DFLP] requested that the political formula and the political program be reconsidered. As regards the former, they wanted the leadership to be called either the national front or the democratic national, pan-Arab, and Islamic front. As regards the political program, they demanded two things: an item mentioning international legitimacy, and another mentioning a phased Palestinian state.

Hamas and a number of other forces rejected these two items because international legitimacy includes recognition of Israel, and so does the phased state.

This is the stalemate reached by the 10 factions. We in Hamas are eager to preserve the cohesiveness of the 10 factions, especially since the Palestinian people are now facing an immense challenge. But we cannot accept international legitimacy or a phased solution as this entails recognition of Israel.

We hope the brothers in the PFLP and the DFLP will reconsider their position. We are for staying together under some common denominator. If they want to reduce our common ground, we will not mind, and we will leave the ideological relationships for the future Palestinian parliament. Let everyone offer his principled ideological or political views, but at this stage, we believe that we must meet on some common denominators, namely, confronting the Gaza-Jericho agreement, rejecting the recognition of Israel, continuing the intifadah, and continuing the jihad operations. If we cannot expand the base, then we should at least keep it as it is now.

[Madani] Hamas leader Shaykh Ahmad Yasin has recently said that Hamas is ready to participate in the self-rule elections if held.

[Ghawshah] This is untrue and inaccurate. We would like to say that the letters we receive from inside [the occupied territories] are checked. Shaykh Ahmad Yasin does not write, but speaks. Someone around him wrote down what he had said, and so there was room for inaccuracy. Moreover, the circumstances of the shaykh must be taken into consideration. He is isolated from the world and what is happening in it. But in his letters, and in the important letter in which he discusses Gaza-Jericho, he, of course, rejects the plan, but at the same time, he supports a legislative council.

But what is the legislative council? It is different from the executive council that is linked to self-rule. No one disagrees over the need for a legislative council for the Palestinian people. There was inaccuracy, and some people tried to suggest that Shaykh Yasin agrees to an executive council linked to self-rule.

The Hamas position is clear. We have always said that we reject self-rule and the elections that lead to it. It is inconceivable that we would reject self-rule and accept the elections.

We said that even in our rejection of the autonomy, we support peaceful and nonviolent means. Self-rule is not in the interest of the Palestinian people. Our genuine interest lies in our adherence to the land and our rejection of self-rule for inhabitants.

[Madani] Has the standing of the Islamists been affected when, in the Jordanian elections, the number of their deputies shrank from 36 to 16?

[Ghawshah] The success of the Islamic movement in Jordan is similar to the success of the Islamic movement anywhere else. Considering the election law that governed the recent Jordanian elections, the result was good. The Islamic movement retained 16 of its previous 32 seats. It is difficult to win more seats under the one-man-one-vote system. We do not believe that the Islamic movement in Jordan has been weakened, although some political analysts are trying to suggest so. We believe to the contrary. Despite the election law and the strong campaign against the Islamists, the Islamic movement won 16 seats.

[Madani] What are your proposals for the new parliament?

[Ghawshah] You should pose the question to the Jordanian Islamic Action Front, but I believe they have a political program to implement.

[Madani] What projects might be implemented in the occupied territories after the Gaza-Jericho agreement?

[Ghawshah] I believe that the Tunis group has fallen into a quandary, illustrated by the fact that 'Arafat cannot help but be the focus of everything. He takes charge even of technical issues that he cannot handle well. He has put himself in charge of the reconstruction and development council. We believe it is difficult for such projects to succeed or ease the Palestinian people's burdens. The reason is that 'Arafat acts in accordance with his one-man mentality, politically, economically, socially, and in every other sphere. Hence we declare that these projects

will not succeed in easing the Palestinian people's sufferings and improving their deteriorating economic conditions. Also, the available funds cannot solve the housing crisis alone. Let's say they want to build 100,000 housing units at a cost of, say, $30,000 each. This will require $3 billion. But the available amount is only $2 billion. So the money set for the purpose is not enough for the Palestinian people. It might act as a palliative but it cannot solve their problems. We believe that the Palestinian people need permanent assistance: not charity from the countries and parties responsible for their current predicament, notably the United Nations and the Western countries, but aid from the Arabs and Muslims who have billions. It is these who must give aid to the nation which fights on their behalf and defends their capitals. If they do not do so and the Zionist scheme succeeds, God forbid, it will reach all the Arab capitals. It will then be too late for regret.

[Madani] Are you afraid the region will be turned into a Middle East project?

[Ghawshah] The Gaza-Jericho agreement is more an economic than a political agreement. It is intended to turn the Palestinian people into a bridge or broker, I am sorry to say, for propagating the Zionist economy and capital. Rabin, the agreement's author, wants to establish Greater Israel under the name of the Middle East region whose main base is Israel. We believe that this will pose a threat to Jordan, Syria, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia and other Arab countries. You can understand this when you compare the size of the Jews' economy, amounting to no less than $70 billion, with Jordan's economy, which is a mere $3 billion. Zionist goods will invade all our markets and many Arabs will find themselves caught in the Zionist economic wheel.

[Madani] Sir, there are fears, God forbid, of Palestinian infighting. You have spoken of this because coexistence between two extremes, the supporters and opponents of the agreement, is not possible. This is especially true in view of the fact that the current escalation of incidents in the occupied territories aims to topple the agreement by force of arms and by violence against the occupation.

[Ghawshah] It is true that such fighting among Palestinians is the chief preoccupation of Rabin and the entity he leads. They wish to provoke such fighting and make 'Arafat play this dirty role. However, current facts show that there is not much likelihood of such infighting.

The following things preclude Palestinian infighting. First of all there are the actual hurdles in the way of implementing the Gaza-Jericho agreement. Second, Hamas adopts the position of refusing to be drawn into inter-Palestinian fighting. It bans such fighting, does not believe in political assassination, and gives the Palestinian people total liberty to make their own decisions by way of dialogue. We can see that the majority of Palestinian intellectuals, indeed most Arab intellectuals, oppose the agreement. The third factor preventing Palestinian infighting is the internal conflict within 'Arafat's own camp. The physical liquidations in Gaza were inter-Fatah eliminations. Apparently, the aim is to eliminate local Fatah leaders and replace them with Fatah leaders groomed abroad for this purpose. This explains the erosion of the role of Faysal al-Husayni's group and others.

These are major obstacles caused by the fact that there are fewer posts offered than people to whom they have been promised. Hamas dissociates itself from all this.

[Madani] Will you not participate if you are offered positions?

[Ghawshah] We will not participate.

[Madani] Never?

[Ghawshah] We will not participate in the self-government or its elections.

[Madani] Nor in the authority's establishments?

[Ghawshah] There will be internal struggle between them and this struggle will increase in the future. The fourth issue I referred to, the issue of funds, is also an obstacle. How will they be able to translate the funds from abroad into real projects inside and prevent some of these funds from finding their way into the pockets of some? There was previous experience when support was given after the Baghdad conference. It was noticed, and the people of the West Bank know, that a lot of those funds ended up in the pockets of some people.

What guarantee is there that these funds will not also end up in the pockets of some people?

That is what I am saying. Also, we do not fear the Palestinian police because it was formed from the Palestinian Liberation Army officers. They were trained and prepared to liberate Palestine and not ho kill the stone-throwing child or the mujahid who is fighting the Zionist enemy. We completely rule out the possibility that they will open fire on a mujahid who wants to liberate Haifa, Yafo, and 'Akko or on a stone-throwing child. The Palestinian people rule out the possibility that those policemen will open fire on the Palestinian mujahidin.

In view of all the above, we believe that the plot of Rabin, Clinton, and those behind them to create a Palestinian conflict will fail.

[Madani] At a meeting with Jordanian member of parliament Tujan Faysal, I was surprised to hear her say that she was subjected to a campaign by the Islamists such that they called her an infidel and demanded that she be divorced and her children taken from her because she raised questions about democracy and progress. She said that she was even fired from her job and banned from writing because of her stand on women's rights.

[Ghawshah] I prefer that this question be addressed to the Islamic Movement in Jordan because this is outside my sphere. But I say that what you mentioned happened

in the previous elections campaign. According to my information, it was not the Islamic Movement which went to court against Tujan but other people. The Islamic Movement is not interested in filing cases against Tujan. It is noted, however, that Tujan and many liberal women writers are writing in the press and expressing their views.

It is noted that there is plurality and a margin of freedom in Jordan. Every person expresses his views. But this does not prevent one from observing that women have thrown their weight behind the Islamic Movement. The Jordanian women committed to Islam and who are very numerous were one of the reasons for the Islamic Movement's success. This also is taken into consideration. I do not believe that the Islamic Movement is afraid of any stand taken by any woman writer or liberal member of parliament. It leaves them to raise whatever issues they want.

[Madani] Why was she subjected to pressure, then?

[Ghawshah] I do not believe that there was pressure on her. On the contrary—I heard— Islamists took part in seminars and a dialogue took place before the elections and it was very calm and there was no pressure. At any rate, the Islamic Movement's stand will become clear in the Jordanian House of Representatives (...) [punctuation as published]

'Peace Opponents' View Middle East's Future

AU0712215093 Mainz ZDF Television Network in German 2000 GMT 7 Dec 93

[Report by Harald Lueders on the "Frontal" Magazine Program]

[Text] When Israel and the PLO concluded their peace in Washington, war escalated in Gaza. The strategy of the Gaza-Jericho agreement's opponents is simple. The best argument against peace are casualties on both sides. The Israeli Army faces stone throwers with live ammunition; activists, particularly those of the Islamic Hamas movement, reply by killing Israeli civilians. Violence is escallating with increasing speed. The actions of Palestinian peace opponents are far from spontaneous. They are controlled in detail. Last week, in Damascus, there was a meeting of the so-called 10 factions. The wire-pullers of Middle East terrorism are gathering around this table. Each of those present is listed on top of the Israeli secret service 'wanted' list. Islamic fundamentalists and PLO dissidents unite in a joint fight against 'Arafat.

[Begin recording of George Habash, head of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine; in Arabic with superimposed German translation] This agreement does not solve any of the Palestinian people's problems. This agreement completely ignores the situation of 3 to 4 millions of Palestinians living outside the occupied territories. It does not offer these people any perspectives. This agreement does not achieve the withdrawal of the Israelis from all the territories occupied in 1967, and, above all, it does not achieve the withdrawal from Jerusalem. For these reasons, our people, and we, reject this agreement. [end recording]

In 1970, Habash made headlines all over the world when his then strictly Marxist-Leninist People's Front bombed three hijacked airplanes in the Jordanian desert. Today, leftist Habash is seeking cooperation with his former opponents, the Islamic fundamentalists.

[Begin Habash recording] Organizations like the Holy Islamic War, like Hamas, that is the groups of Islamic resistance, but also important PLO factions agree on the complete rejection of this agreement. We further agree that it is necessary to deprive 'Arafat of his power. [end recording]

This is a Palestinian camp near Sidon in South Lebanon. Fatah Commander Abu Hasan was 'Arafat's most important man in this region for years. Now he has changed sides, together with 2,000 armed men. This is an important success for 'Arafat's opponents in Damascus.

[Begin recording Abu Hasan, Fatah commander; in Arabic with superimposed German translation] Everything that has happened since the Gaza-Jericho agreement was signed should show Europe and the world that there can be no peace before the Palestinian people has achieved its full rights and before Israel has not withdrawn from all the occupied territories. [end recording]

What 'Arafat's former commander puts rather cautiously is expressed more clearly in the streets of the camp.

[Begin recording of unidentified Palestinian pedestrian] I am against the Gaza-Jericho agreement. I am opposed to any agreement with the Israelis. We can only get our rights by means of violence because we were deprived of them by violent means. The intifadah is the only way we can get our rights. Our people will sentence 'Arafat. He no longer has a right to speak for us. We have never given him the authority to do so. [end recording]

Especially among young people in the occupied territories 'Arafat has a difficult position. Here, the hardliners are the heroes. Imad 'Aql, the HAMAS military leader who was shot by the Israelis, is much more popular as a young martyr than the aging 'Arafat.

This is the camp of the deported in the Israeli-Lebanese no-man's land. On 17 December, Israel wants to release those interned here. In the camp we met Imad 'Aql's brother. His words are clear: revenge.

[Begin recording of Imad 'Aql's brother; in Arabic with superimposed German translation] The death of a Hamas brother can only be avenged by the death of one or two Israelis. But the value of my brother's death will be calculated completely differently. Only god knows what the calculation will look like. [end recording]

This is Syria's capital Damascus. Here the activities against the Gaza-Jericho agreement are coordinated. For President al-'Asad, the 'Arafat opponents are trumps in his poker game for his separate agreement with Israel. At

the moment he lets those gathered here do what they want, even if they demand that 'Arafat be sentenced.

[Begin recording of 'Ahmad Jibril, head of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine—General Command; in Arabic with superimposed German translation] We are the PLO. 'Arafat does not represent anybody anymore. We stick to the PLO constitution. 'Arafat has betrayed us and our cause. We suggest that 'Arafat is brought before a public tribunal and sentenced. But not only he has to pay for his betrayal, but his entire clique will pay. [end recording]

In September, in Washington, for many observers, 'Arafat finally turned from terrorist to politician. But for many in his own camp this handshake turned a revolutionary into a traitor. Until a short time ago, 'Arafat was on the hit list of the Israeli secret service, now he is number one on his former friends' hit list.

PFLP, DFLP Urge International Protection

JN0812064893 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 0600 GMT 8 Dec 93

[Text] The unified leadership of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine [PFLP] and the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine [DFLP] has issued a joint statement in Damascus in which it called for international protection for the Palestinian people in the occupied territory and for forcing Israel to fully withdraw from all occupied territory within a fixed period of time.

The statement warns PLO Executive Committee Chairman Yasir 'Arafat against submitting to Israeli pressure and denouncing resistance operations against settlers and occupiers.

PFLP West Bank Activists Detained

TA0712183793 Jerusalem Israel Television Channel 1 Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 7 Dec 93

[Text] The security forces last night detained about 30 Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine [PFLP] activists from the Ramallah, al-Birah, Bethlehem, Nabulus, and Hebron regions. Among the detainees are pharmacist Ilyas Rashmawi from Bayt Sahur, Ahmad Sa'adat from Ramallah, Rubhi al-Qatamish from al-Birah, 'Umar Abu-'Ubayd and 'Adnan Mithqal from Bethlehem, and 'Ali Jaradat from Bi'r Zayt University. Our correspondent Yoni Ben-Menahem reports that these detentions were carried out as preventive measures on occasion of 11 December, the anniversary of the PFLP's establishment, and 13 December, the start of implementation of the Declaration of Principles accord.

'Major Administrative Officials' To Keep Posts

JN0812091993 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 8 Dec 93 p 1

[Unattributed report]

[Text] The Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) has decided to keep major administrative officials in their posts in the Gaza Strip instead of appointing new personnel.

PLO officials told the JORDAN TIMES that the decision took into consideration the fact that the heads of the various administrative departments have the needed expertise and the political credentials.

"They are qualified and have political credibility. There is no doubt about their nationalism," said a PLO official contacted in Tunis.

But the other reasons behind the decision seem to be political, in the sense that the PLO is racing against time to prove its preparedness and that it is trying to avoid the resentment of local administration officials.

"A shakeup of the existing system will not be wise. Other than that we do not want them to feel that they are being invaded and replaced by political appointees in Tunis," said the official.

The decision was made after extensive consultations with Palestinian leaders in the occupied territories.

Supervisory Committee, 'Abbas 'Reservations' Viewed

NC0712163393 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1515 GMT 7 Dec 93

[Text] Tunis, 7 Dec (MENA)—PLO Executive Committee member Dr. Samir Ghawshah has stated that during its latest meeting, the PLO set up a committee to supervise the negotiations with Israel on implementing the Declaration of Principles between the PLO and Israel.

Speaking to a MENA correspondent in Tunis today, Dr. Ghawshah said the committee is the same follow-up committee that supervised the Palestinian delegation during the bilateral negotiations in Washington, which halted after the signing of the PLO-Israeli agreement. He said the committee is chaired by Mahmud 'Abbas, alias Abu-Mazin, and has Yasir 'Abd-Rabbuh, Sulayman al-Najjab, and Samir Ghawshah as members, who are all PLO Executive Committee members. Ghawshah noted that Abu-Mazin expressed reservations about participating in the committee and announced that he did not want to chair or take part in it. At the end of the PLO Executive Committee meeting, Abu-Mazin reportedly announced his refusal to participate, he added.

Ghawshah added that in the next PLO Executive Committee meeting, expected to be held following Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat's return from Germany, Abu-Mazin's stance will be clarified and the final structure of the committee determined. He said the purpose of the committee is to supervise the daily activity of the Palestinian side in the negotiations with Israel held in Cairo and al-'Arish as well as the Palestinian economic delegation taking part in the Paris meetings.

Israeli Intransigence Could Revive Extremism

PM0712114993 London AL-QUDS AL-'ARABI in Arabic 6 Dec 93 p 11

[Editorial: "Israeli Mines in Christopher's Way"]

[Text] U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher, who has toured and is touring the Arab capitals concerned with the peace process, did not deny that there are obstacles preventing the achievement of the desired progress toward a comprehensive settlement. However, he did not specify the quarter placing these obstacles and escalating tension in the region, that is, the Israeli Government.

Perhaps we would be adding nothing new if we said that Christopher considers his visit to Damascus the most important point in his tour, as he will try to revitalize the Syrian-Israeli and Lebanese-Israeli tracks, since failure to achieve progress on these two tracks has led to opposition being mobilized against the Palestinian-Israeli agreement signed on the White House lawn on 13 September. It is still early to predict a success or failure in this connection. It depends primarily on the proposals Christopher is carrying with him and his ability to put pressure on Israel to respond to the Syrian proposals, which the Syrian press has summed up in the demand for an Israeli announcement of Syrian sovereignty over the Golan Heights in return for signing a peace treaty and Declaration of Principles.

And Syria realizes—as Egyptian President Husni Mubarak said at a recent press conference—that peace requires an exchange of ambassadors and the establishment of diplomatic and economic relations between the parties involved. But Israel—as usual—wants to blackmail and wants more than that. It wants the land, or part of it, and peace at the same time. And it wants to deprive the adversary of all means of power. It has been leaked that Israel—with support from the United States—wants to do to Syria what it did to Iraq, that is to deprive it of all the dangerous weapons in its possession, namely long-range missiles and chemical weapons, the poor man's nuclear bomb.

Without doubt, under peace these weapons are supposed to be done away with. Add to this that the Arabs have realized that the military option—at least in this stage—should be excluded. Because the current world balances of power are disrupted and in Israel's favor because of U.S. control of world destinies after the collapse of the socialist bloc.

But it is noted that requests for disarming the Arabs are not linked to similar treatment for Israel, which the U.S. Government admitted a week ago has nuclear weapons. It seems that concessions are always requested from the Arabs, on the pretext that they are undemocratic and have no good intentions.

U.S. politicians seem to forget that Israel was and still is the aggressor. It is occupying the land, carrying out all repression and terror operations against a whole Arab people, that is the Palestinian Arab people. But it seems that Israel's crimes are always forgiven by Western governments, and its repression is considered self-defense. As for the Arabs' resistance, it is terrorism.

The big challenge facing Christopher on his current tour is the same challenge he faced on previous tours. Namely, how to convince Israel of the Arab and world desire for peace and how to persuade it to deal seriously with the settlement plans proposed in this connection.

The two and a half months since the Palestinian-Israeli agreement was signed give the impression that the Israeli side does not honor its pledges or adhere to its signatures. Here we are approaching the date set for beginning Israel's withdrawal from the Gaza Strip and Jericho, but the Israeli Government is talking about postponement, and it has been decided unilaterally that 13 December is not a holy day.

Without doubt the Syrian and the Lebanese sides are watching this Israeli delay in implementing the agreement and believe it does not encourage "flexibility" or the signing of new agreements. And maybe the right thing is for the governments to wait for some time to probe Israel's true intentions and its commitment—in practice—to peace agreements.

Israel made a big mistake when it resorted to evasions and maneuvers after the signing of the Gaza-Jericho agreement. This is because this agreement was an opportunity for it to make it a "model" for the agreements to come, despite the big loopholes it contained. With these mistakes and evasions Israel provided strong ammunition to oppositionists and hardliners and prompted the other Arab parties to be wary of its intentions.

Christopher's mission will not be easy. Not because of the Arab positions, but because of the Israeli intransigence based on an assumption which is correct to a large extent, namely that the Arabs are the weak and surrendering side accepting solutions and concessions which were almost impossible two years ago. But this weak position at the official level might not be the same at the people's level. Proof of this is the current reaction in the occupied territories, which rejects the Israeli delay in withdrawal. If this reaction continues, and if intransigent Israeli policies continue, it will return extremism—the first scare in the Arab region—to the region and torpedo the current moderation march.

OPEC Affairs

OAPEC Ministerial Council Meets in Damascus

Secretary General Arrives 2 Dec

JN0312091293 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 2115 GMT 2 Dec 93

[Excerpts] 'Abd-al-'Aziz al-Turki, secretary general of the Organization of Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries [OAPEC], arrived in Damascus this evening to

participate in the 51st OAPEC Ministerial Council meeting to begin in Damascus on 8 December. [passage omitted]

The OAPEC Ministerial Council will discuss issues dealing with coordination of oil policies among member countries in a manner that will serve joint Arab action. [passage omited]

Session Opens 8 Dec

JN0812104993 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0915 GMT 8 Dec 93

[Text] The 51st session of the ministerial council of the Organization of Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries [OAPEC] opened at the Ebla al-Sham Hotel at 1000 today under Kuwaiti Oil Minister 'Ali al-Baghli, chairman of the current OAPEC session.

The opening was attended by the oil ministers of member Arab states, including Saudi Arabia, Kuwait. Egypt, the United Arab Emirates, Iraq, Bahrain, Libya, Algeria, Qatar, and Syria, as well as OAPEC's secretary general and the delegations accompanying the ministers.

The council began discussing items on its agenda, which include the draft estimated budget of the OAPEC and affiliated companies and corporations for 1994, the executive office's memorandum on the General Secretariat's activities in the environment field, the memorandum on the seminar on safety and the environment in oil industries in the Arab countries, and the executive office's memorandum on the progress of work related to the data bank.

Arabs Propose Tax for Environmental Protection

NC0712143193 Paris AFP in English 0849 GMT 7 Dec 93

[By Nadim Kawash]

[Text] Abu Dhabi, Dec 7 (AFP)—Arab states, which control 60 percent of global oil reserves, are proposing a worldwide tax that could raise more than four billion dollars a year to protect the environment.

The idea is seen as a "fair" alternative to a proposed European Community energy tax, which has caused alarm in oil-producing states on the grounds it would slow down demand for crude and depress their earnings.

"There are several more effective and fair alternatives to the taxes on oil products," Arab states said in their 1993 joint economic report, prepared by the Organisation of Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries (OAPEC) and two other regional organisations.

"The first is the imposition of a worldwide income tax of 0.25 percent, which could fetch around four billion dollars a year in the industrial countries and 750 million dollars in developing nations.

"The sum could be used to clean and protect the environment."

It is the latest in a series of Arab proposals to persuade the 12-nation E.C. to steer away from its planned tax, which the community says is designed to protect the environment by containing the emission of carbon dioxide.

But Arab and other oil producers charge the E.C.'s real aim is to secure extra revenue to tackle domestic budget deficits.

Reservations from Britain and other E.C. nations have held up enforcement of the tax, which will levy three dollars on every imported barrel of oil, to rise to 10 dollars by the year 2000.

"Imposing taxes on oil products will not protect the environment nor will it curb crude imports," said the Arab report, part of which was carried by the official Kuwaiti news agency KUNA.

"They will only achieve large increases in government revenues in industrial countries at the expense of oil producers."

Gulf Arab states have strongly attacked the tax on the grounds it would affect them most as oil accounts for nearly 90 percent of their income.

Around four million barrels per day (b/d) of their oil output goes to the E.C., while 2.8 million b/d are exported to Japan and two million b/d to the United States.

One of the scenarios on the effects of the carbon tax on Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states is that it will depress their earnings by 14 billion dollars a year, hurting their development plans.

The revenues of GCC states—Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates—are already under pressure from a sharp decline in oil prices.

Since 1981, their earnings have been slashed nearly threefold to 70 billion dollars in 1992.

"Definitely, Arab oil and gas exports will be hurt by the policies of the industrial nations," said the Arab report, also prepared by the Arab Monetary Fund and the Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development.

"Imposing taxes on oil products will also boost consumption of coal and burning of wood, which will cause further damage to the environment."

It said Arab oil exports stood at 38.3 percent of the total world crude exports of 39.7 million b/d in 1992, while natural gas exports accounted for 12.1 percent of the total world gas supplies.

Algeria

French National Killed in Blida Province

LD0812091693 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 0600 GMT 8 Dec 93

[Text] A French national who died of gun wounds was found yesterday in a cottage in Larbaa, Blida Province. The security services' statement pointed out that the French national, aged 67 years, was a private company retiree in Larbaa.

In another development, a security services statement pointed out that the so-called Ahmed Dacha, a 56-year old mechanic, has been arrested in Tipaza Province on charges of sending written threats and blackmailing citizens.

He attempted during his interrogation to give the impression that this issue was connected to terrorism and that he carried it out following threats by a terrorist group. He admitted, however, that he was the sole perpetrator of these acts.

British Computer Expert Assassinated in Arzew

LD0812105893 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1000 GMT 8 Dec 93

[Text] Security services have reported that a British national was assassinated in Arzew [190 miles west of Algiers] yesterday by armed persons at a gasoline station in Bettioua. His name was Malcolm David. He was working for Pullman Kellogg as a computer expert.

Ali Kafi Receives Bosnian Vice President

LD0712213493 Algiers ENTV Television Network in Arabic 1900 GMT 7 Dec 93

[Excerpts] Bosnian Vice President Ejup Ganic arrived in our country today with a message from Bosnian President Alija Izetbegovic to Higher State Council Chairman Ali Kafi. He was received at the presidency by Tedjani Haddam, member of the Higher State Council. Talks revolved around normalizing ties between the two countries.

At the end of the meeting, Mr. Ejup Ganic expressed his pleasure at being in Algeria. He said that the visit is a good chance to tell the Algerian people, through their officials, about the tragedy of the Bosnian people and the victims of war. He said that the tragedy was caused by the Serbs, who killed women and children, destroyed homes, mosques, and any building with an Islamic character.

He said his visit to Algeria is part of a tour of Islamic states and other countries to convey the truth about the suffering of the Bosnian people and to win support for them.

National Defense Minister Lamine Zeroual later received Mr. Ejup Ganic at the Defense Ministry headquarters. [passage omitted] The two sides discussed issues of mutual interest.

Egypt

U.S. Secretary of State Christopher Pays Visit

Musa: Visit 'Particularly Important'

NC0712214593 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 2100 GMT 7 Dec 93

[Text] President Husni Mubarak will receive U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher as soon as he arrives in Cairo tomorrow for a visit of several hours as part of his regional tour.

Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa said Christopher's visit is particularly important because it is part of the ongoing effort to advance the peace process. He said Egypt will hear from the U.S. secretary the results of his talks in Israel, Syria, and Jordan and will explain to him the results of its contacts with the concerned parties.

The foreign minister said Egypt is working to remove the obstacles hindering the implementation of the Palestinian-Israeli Declaration of Principles and to push the Syrian-Israeli negotiations ahead.

Warren Christopher will hold a news conference at the end of his talks with President Husni Mubarak.

Christopher Arrives, Meets Mubarak

NC0812091793 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0858 GMT 8 Dec 93

[Text] Cairo, 8 Dec (MENA)—U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher arrived in Cairo for a brief visit to Egypt today and a meeting with President Husni Mubarak.

Immediately after his arrival, the U.S. secretary of state left for the Presidential Office in Heliopolis to meet President Mubarak and discuss with him recent Middle East developments and ways of giving impetus to the peace talks on all tracks.

Christopher's visit to Egypt is part of his brief Middle East tour, seeking to bring the views of the various parties of the Arab-Israeli conflict closer.

[Cairo MENA in Arabic at 0900 GMT on 8 December reports: "President Husni Mubarak received U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher at the Presidential Offices in Heliopolis today. Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa attended the meeting."]

Christopher Holds Talks With Musa

NC0812124493 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1156 GMT 8 Dec 93

[Text] Cairo, 8 Dec (MENA)—Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa held a round of talks with U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher at Cairo Airport's VIP lounge. These talks complemented the U.S. official's talks earlier today with President Husni Mubarak which dealt with the current efforts to give impetus to the peace process and overcome any hurdles.

The U.S. secretary of state is due to leave Cairo for a second trip to Israel at the conclusion of his talks with 'Amr Musa.

Christopher Leaves for Israel

NC0812134893 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1300 GMT 8 Dec 93

[Text] Cairo, 8 Dec (MENA)—U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher left Cairo for Israel this afternoon after a visit of several hours to Egypt during which he was received by President Muhammad Husni Mubarak.

Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa held talks with the U.S. secretary of state for about an hour at Cairo Airport's VIP lounge with the participation of the Egyptian and U.S. delegation members. The two ministers then held private talks on ways to advance the peace process.

Christopher was seen off by Foreign Minister Musa.

332 People Arrested After Riots in Asyut

NC0712213793 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1940 GMT 7 Dec 93

[Text] Cairo, 7 Dec (MENA)—An official security source has stated that as part of the current vicious confrontation of the terrorist elements—under all their names—the police arrested 332 people for involvement in riots and demonstrations in Asyut yesterday.

The State Security intelligence received information that elements from the terrorist organization calling itself the Islamic Group in Asyut Governorate (?were using) the al-Rahmah Mosque in the city to shelter terrorists [word indistinct] wanted in connection with many terrorist crimes.

The security source said the elements were using the mosque's rooms and annexes to hide their hostile leaflets and publications, to hold organizational meetings to work out hostile schemes against the security forces, and to hold weekly seminars to instigate the public.

The official security source said the various investigation agencies monitored the movements of this suspect group while holding its weekly seminar yesterday. Some of its leaders were delivering speeches condemning the recent death sentences passed by several courts against some terrorist elements, especially those who fired indiscriminately in the area of Zinhum on 19 July.

The group and its followers' plan to stage a demonstration immediately after the seminar was also uncovered. When the group tried to go into the street for a demonstration the same evening, the security force stationed in the area advised the crowd to disperse.

The source added that the elements refused and threw stones and fired indiscriminately using weapons in their possession.

The police cordoned off the area and put it under control, arresting [word indistinct] of those involved in the riots and demonstrations. Interrogations began immediately and it was found that [words indistinct] previously convicted for distributing hostile leaflets, attacking Christians, possessing firearms without license, and attacking police. It was also found that [words indistinct] are wanted to appear before the prosecution in connection with old cases.

The security source said the circumstances of the other elements arrested at the scene (?are being checked). The source said three terrorists were injured during the operation. They are: 1. [name indistinct], a medical student (released). He was injured in both legs. 2. [name indistinct], a peddler, who was injured in both legs. 3. Fathi Tamam, who holds a polytechnic diploma. He received a bullet in the left leg.

The source stressed that the police suffered no casualties, adding that after the arrests, the mosque annex was searched and it was found that the terrorists were living there.

Many publications and leaflets, forged documents, passports, identity cards, and papers, sketches for hostile acts that the group planned against police officers and individuals were seized along with four revolvers, three of them locally made, and cold steel.

Asyut prosecution indicted the three injured people [words indistinct], joining a crowd aimed at attacking people and property [words indistinct], using violence against police to prevent them from performing their job, and possessing firearms without license.

The prosecution ordered the three to be remanded for 15 days. (?The general prosecution) began investigations with the other suspects.

The security source stressed that the security services will continue their all-out confrontation of terrorists everywhere and that they can [words indistinct] any violation of law under any pretext [words indistinct] for the sake of the citizens and the homeland.

U.S. Welcome for Rushdie Questioned

NC0712154993 Cairo AL-AHRAM in Arabic 2 Dec 93 p 2

[Ahmad Bahjat's "Kaleidoscope" column: "The Return of the Phantom"]

[Text] Britain's Prince Charles delivered a speech at Oxford University a few weeks ago. He spoke like a real king when he called on the West to understand Islam and the Muslims' problems better. He also called for conducting a more objective dialogue between the two major religions.

This stance represents a ray of light amid the black clouds in which the Muslims are mistreated by the West.

A few weeks later, we were taken aback by a different stance adopted by the leader of the West. This new stance is summed up in the return of the phantom and his appearance in the theater. The phantom is Salman Rushdie, the author of *The Satanic Verses*, and the theater is the United States.

Rushdie appeared in the United States. He was accorded an official and academic welcome, which is too difficult to comprehend. Rushdie was welcomed at the greatest U.S. technological institute in Boston, where he was awarded meritorious medals of the highest degree. He was received by the U.S. secretary of state in Washington and then by U.S. President Clinton at the White House—like any other head of state.

This raises many questions. What does Rushdie have to do with technology and how much did he contribute to this field? What did he invent so that he would be honored? And why did the secretary of state and the U.S. President receive him? Salman Rushdie's latest invention is his book *The Satanic Verses*. It is a book in which the writer humiliates Islam and its sacred symbols. He does this under the slogan of freedom of thought.

But is this the secret for honoring him? He has insulted Islam and the Muslims and provoked millions in various countries, prompting Iran to place a price on his head. While we do not support the principle of instigation to kill him, we also reject the principle of honoring him, because he has offended a religion followed by 25 percent of the world's population.

We are not here to defend Islam, because Islam is defended by its God, who punishes those who humiliate its symbols. Our question is: Who convinced the U.S. President to receive Rushdie at the White House? This meeting will backfire on the President and U.S. interests.

Minister on Sale of Public Companies, Shares

NC0712192293 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1520 GMT 7 Dec 93

[Text] Cairo, 7 Dec (MENA)—Dr. 'Atif 'Ubayd, minister of the public business sector and minister of state for administrative development and environment affairs, has reported that it has been decided to use the revenue from the sale of some business sector companies, which is expected to reach 1.5 billion Egyptian pounds by the end of the year, for changing the financial structures of companies experiencing losses and for settling local and foreign debts to banks.

In statements he made today, the minister said that final negotiations are now under way to sell a group of hotels to Egyptian and Arab buyers.

He added that the government is on the verge of offering for sale to Egyptians between 10 and 40 percent of its shares at a value of around 1.8 billion pounds.

He explained that the shares will be sold to employees of the business sector companies at their real price and not at their nominal one and that the employees will be given a special reduction to encourage them to own these shares, which will be done in coordination with the labor federation. He said the reduction percentage for each share is being studied now so that a large reduction will be given to shares that bring in low dividends and a lesser reduction to shares that bring in higher dividends.

African Leaders Meet for Conference in Cairo

wa0712135193

For reportage on the African minisummit hosted by Egypt in Cairo, please see the Inter-African Affairs section of the 7 December Sub-Saharan Africa DAILY REPORT and subsequent issues.

Morocco

Bosnian Vice President Arrives for Talks

LD0512143093 Rabat Moroccan Kingdom Radio Network in Arabic 1300 GMT 5 Dec 93

[Excerpt] Ejup Ganic, vice president of the Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina, arrived in Morocco this morning in the company of his country's ambassador to Tunisia.

At the VIP lounge of King Mohamed V International Airport, Mr. Ganic made a statement and talked about the desperate situation in which the people of Bosnia-Herzegovina find themselves as a result of the continuous attacks against them. He said that he had come to Morocco to hold talks with His Majesty King Hassan II in view of the remarkable standing His Majesty enjoys, particularly with the Islamic peoples and states. [passage omitted]

Holds News Conference

LD0612222393 Rabat RTM Television Network in Arabic 2030 GMT 6 Dec 93

[Text] Bosnian Vice President Ganic today met representatives of the national and international press, along with the attendance of Minister of State Moulay Ahmed Alaoui. Here are the main points of this meeting:

[Unidentified correspondent] At the beginning of this meeting, Ejub Ganic expressed satisfaction over the results of his talks with His Majesty King Hassan II, praising his majesty's supportive stands toward the just causes in various parts of the world. Further, Ejup Ganic reviewed the developments of events in Bosnia-Herzegovina and the suffering of the Muslims there as a result of the siege imposed by the Serbs, and the Serbs' repeated attacks against Bosnian towns. He pointed out that the Serbs' plans aim at liquidating the Muslims in this part of the world and destroying their culture and religious symbols.

In his reply to questions presented by representatives of various media channels, the Bosnian vice president recalled the efforts made to overcome the crisis and to lift the siege imposed on the Muslims of Bosnia-Herzegovina, pointing out the Serbs' intransigence and their opposition to all efforts made to stop the bloodshed.

The Bosnian vice president also called for the need to achieve Islamic solidarity and extend the scope of support for the cause of the people of Bosnia-Herzegovina until the crisis, which the people are experiencing, is overcome.

Expresses 'Satisfaction' With Visit

LD0712161893 Rabat Moroccan Kingdom Radio Network in Arabic 1300 GMT 7 Dec 93

[Text] Ejup Ganic, vice president of the Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina, this morning left Mohamed V International Airport following the visit he paid to our country which was crowned by the audience accorded to him by King Hassan II, may God make him victorious.

Concerning the results of this visit, the Bosnian official gave a statement in which he praised the wisdom of King Hassan II, may God make him victorious, his farsightedness toward the Bosnian crisis, his majesty's pressing desire in finding an urgent settlement to this crisis, stopping the Muslims' suffering there, and putting an end to the human rights violations in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

He added that he was deeply imppressed by the knowledge of all the government members that he had met in Rabat of what was happening—whether in the arena or in the talks currently taking place in London, New York, and Geneva—to restore peace to Bosnia and guarantee its continuity.

He said that his visit to Morocco was in search of aid and support. He concluded his statement by expressing satisfaction at this visit.

Official Reports on Human Rights Situation

LD0412155093 Rabat MAP in English 1245 GMT 4 Dec 93

[Text] Rabat, Dec. 04 (MAP)—Secretary General of the Advisory Council for Human Rights (CCDH) Mohamed Mikou said here Friday [3 December] at a press conference a permanent commission stemming from the different groups of the council study all the observations made by international organizations.

He added that Amnesty International bases its reports on "hearsay", while council member Thami Khiari explained that Amnesty International was offered transport means to have precise information on the existence of would be secret detention places, but the organization refused arguing it is not in the habit of conducting such enquiries.

Khiari went on to say "we are working with the authorities to definitively shelve the dossiers of the seventies" and affirmed that there is a propensity to overdo human rights situation in Morocco.

Mikou highlighted the move by King Hassan II of Morocco to create a Ministry of Human Rights stressing the council will along with the Ministry endeavor to ensure the protection of human rights in Morocco.

On conscience detainees, Khiari said the council had submitted to King Hassan II the cases of all those who stood trial and who were condemned for their opinions and affirmed that most of the cases were settled.

To a question on the "missing" of Saharan origin, he recalled that roving Ambassador Brahim Hakim and governor to the Interior Ministry Omar Hadrami, both had assumed top positions within the so-called "Polisario" before returning to the motherland, explained to Amnesty International that the list was fabricated by the Polisario and that it even included the names of people who died during fighting.

"The list is vague and does not even specify the date of disappearance, except for the cases of some individuals who were captured in 1975", he said adding that currently there is Sahrawi missing.

Mikou said concerning the situation of human rights in the camps of Tindouf the council strives to denounce violations and informed Amnesty International which worked a report in this respect.

Other members of the council recalled different human rights efforts of the council in favor of prisoners, the reinsertion of others in the society, the situation in prisons, passport issuing.

Before answering the journalists questions, Mikou made a preliminary declaration in which he surveyed the actions of the council groups which are contained in a memorandum addressed to the sovereign last February.

The groups had pondered several issues including the state of prisons, penal questions, the draft code of penal procedure and the recommendations relating to the establishment of the state of law.

Sudan

Foreign Minister Seeks 'Healthy' Ties With U.S.

EA0712195593 Omdurman Republic of Sudan Radio Network in Arabic 1315 GMT 7 Dec 93

[Text] Foreign Minister Husayn Sulayman Abu-Salih has confirmed that Sudan is striving to establish healthy relations with the United States and stressed the need of continuing dialogue toward this end. Dr. Abu-Salih said at the symposium on Sudanese-American relations organized by the Center of Strategic Studies at the Friendship Hall that the Sudanese Government would adamantly resist the disintegration of Sudanese territorial unity as this would pose great dangers to the states of the region. His excellency added that the disagreement with the United States rested on four points, these being so-called terrorism, human rights, democracy and the southern issue.

On the allegations of terrorism, the foreign minister stressed that the United States had no evidence to justify including Sudan in the list of the states sponsoring so-called terrorism. He pointed out that the Americans regarded Sudan's decision to permit the entry of Arabs without visas as a threat to American interests in the area.

Referring to human rights and democracy, he said the United States used to support Garang's movement in the era of the previous governments, a course which he described as colonialist. He stated that the government of the revolution enjoyed mass support by way of the allegiance of the masses of Sudan's various states to the president of the Republic.

Dr. Abu-Salih said Sudan had attracted America's hostility because of its adoption of the Islamic cultural course and its independence of decision; these were principles that could not be abandoned.

Abu-Salih Announces Egypt-Sudan Prisoner Swap

NC0712131793 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1225 GMT 7 Dec 93

[Text] Khartoum, 7 Dec (MENA)—Sudanese Foreign Minister Dr. Husayn Sulayman Abu-Salih said that it has been decided to release the four Egyptian nationals detained in Sudan and the five Sudanese nationals detained in Egypt.

During his meeting with representatives of the foreign and local press in Khartoum today, the Sudanese foreign minister said that this step falls within the context of the agreement reached between the foreign ministries in Egypt and Sudan.

He said that, according to the agreement, the five Sudanese nationals will return from Cairo on board an Egyptian airliner tomorrow morning, and the Egyptian nationals will return to Cairo on board the same plane.

Abu-Salih said he hopes that the agreement will represent a positive initiative toward finding a suitable climate for eliminating the obstacles facing relations with Egypt.

Abu-Salih: Swap 'Good Omen' for Ties

EA0812100593 Omdurman Republic of Sudan Radio Network in Arabic 1300 GMT 7 Dec 93

[Text] Foreign Minister Husayn Sulayman Abu-Salih has announced that the five Sudanese that have been detained in Egypt will be released and will arrive at Khartoum airport at 0900 on Thursday, 9 December. He said the four Egyptians detained in Sudan would leave Khartoum for Cairo on the same aircraft. This would happen in accordance with the agreement reached between the foreign ministries of the two countries on this matter. The announcement was made during Dr. Abu-Salih's address from the information forum at the Foreign Ministry today. His excellency described the agreement as a good omen pointing toward the removal of defects marring relations between the two countries.

Dr. Abu-Salih also touched on the Jericho-Gaza agreement, saying since the signing of the agreement between the PLO and the Israeli enemy, the Sudanese Government had declared its support for the Palestinian option, and that on the basis of Sudan's respect for the resolutions of the Arab League. [as heard] His excellency explained that the league regarded the Jericho-Gaza agreement as a first step toward achieving peace in the Middle East.

Dr. Abu-Salih reaffirmed Sudan's total commitment to the resolutions of all international and regional institutions, adding that in its foreign policies Sudan pursued the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of states.

National Assembly Lifts Boycott of South Africa

AB0712161093 Omdurman Republic of Sudan Radio Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 6 Dec 93

[Text] Today the Transitional National Assembly (TNA) passed an act canceling the boycott of South Africa. The TNA members denounced apartheid, religious persecution, and colonial terrorism practiced by America and Western states. They also hailed the struggle of the patriots from among the majority of the citizens in South Africa against apartheid.

Professor Muhammad Shakir al-Sarraj, chairman of the TNA Foreign Relations Committee, stated in the committee's report that the TNA's passing of the act to cancel the boycott of South Africa had come in support of the efforts of the African militants in South Africa to accomplish transformation toward democratic rule in South Africa. He referred to the fact that many countries had responded by restoring their diplomatic relations with the South African state.

Tunisia

Ukrainian President Visits, Meets Ben Ali

Hails 'Gateway' to North Africa

LD0612205293 Tunis Tunis-7 Television in Arabic 1900 GMT 6 Dec 93

[Excerpt] Ukrainian President Leonid Kravchuk starts a visit to our country today. On this occasion, we will listen to an interview with President Kravchuk which was conducted by Habib Ghribi, Channel 7 correspondent for the Ukrainian Republic and other former Soviet republics.

[Begin recording] [Ghribi] Ukraine, which became independent two years ago, is now seeking to expand its relations with the international community. Within this framework comes the visit of President Kravchuk to Tunisia. Prior to his arrival, we had a meeting with him. We have excerpted from it what relates to the bilateral relations between the two countries.

[Kravchuk, in Ukrainian with superimposed Arabic translation] Economic relations between Ukraine and Tunisia are good. Tunisia comes third in our relations with the international community. Considering the economic resources in both Ukraine and Tunisia, both have great capabilities. As far as our people and I am personally concerned, Tunisia carries important weight and my visit to Tunisia will be the first to North Africa.

We wish to bolster our activities in North Africa and Tunisia is the gateway for this. What is important to us is our thirst to know Tunisia, its people, its culture, and its uniqueness. [passage omitted] [end recording]

Arrives in Tunis

LD0612214893 Tunis Tunisian Republic Radio Network in Arabic 2100 GMT 6 Dec 93

[Text] Ukrainian President Leonid Kravchuk arrived in Tunis this evening on a three-day official visit at the invitation of President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali.

The Ukrainian president, his wife, and the accompanying delegation were met at Carthage International Airport in Tunis by Foreign Minister Habib Ben Yahya, a number of government officials, the governor of Tunis province, and the mayor of Tunis.

Statement Released on Talks

LD0712173393 Tunis Tunisian Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1300 GMT 7 Dec 93

[Text] Relations between Tunisia and Ukraine, bilateral cooperation, and current events at regional and international levels were the focus of the first round of talks held at Carthage Palace today between President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali and Ukrainian President Leonid Kravchuk, according to a press statement released by an official spokesman for the presidency following the meeting.

The statement says that the two presidents focused on relations between Tunisia and Ukraine, and reviewed ways to bolster them in all spheres by intensifying consultations, exchanging visits between officials and businessmen, and exploring appropriate avenues of bilateral cooperation.

The statement adds that the talks also dealt with the countries' policies and plans concerning political reforms leading to the strengthening of pluralism, democracy, and the protection of human rights. Also discussed were development plans and the substantial possibilities they hold for providing impetus to bilateral cooperation, and to Tunisian-Ukrainian relations.

The official spokesman said that Presidents Zine El Abidine Ben Ali and Leonid Kravchuk reviewed the most important current developments, particularly the Middle East peace process. He pointed out that the two presidents had stressed the importance of the phase which the peace talks have reached following the 13 September PLO-Israeli agreement, which required concerted efforts to reach a just and comprehensive solution to the region's issues. At the forefront of this was the Palestinian people's cause, which was central to the Arab-Israeli conflict.

The two presidents also dealt with the situation in the countries in the eastern region of Europe in light of international political developments. President Kravchuk explained his country's stance vis-a-vis the issues of concern to the region, on the basis of the tenets of Ukraine's policy and the state of its international relations. He also talked about the prospects of cooperation between the Arab Maghreb Union and Black Sea area countries.

Kuwait

Writer Warns on Putting All Eggs in U.S. Basket

JN0712215393 Kuwait AL-WATAN in Arabic 4 Dec 93 p 32

["Under the Microscope" column; by Dr. 'Abdallah Fahd al-Nafisi]

[Text] The strategic scene in the Gulf region may drastically change by mid-1994. One of the most important expectations is the lifting of economic sanctions imposed on Iraq; thus Iraq will be free to export oil and to economically deal with the world. This is expected to lead to Iraq's return, though gradually, to its central role in the Gulf region and probably in the Arab area.

All signs indicate that the United States and France in particular are preparing for this issue in a precise and intelligent manner, with clear support by China, hesitation and carelessness by Britain, and probably flexible opposition by Russia, who are the permanent member states of the UN Security Council.

If things go on the current course toward this prospect, Kuwait will find itself in an unenviable corner. After a short stage of reluctance and hesitation, it is expected that all roads will be paved toward normalization of relations between several Gulf and Arab states and Iraq. It is also expected that Iraq will be active in developing its relations with the Western countries and will warn them against the (fundamentalist threat)—which is a pure U.S. expression—represented in Iran. Because the West in general suffers from (Iran's complex), it will rush to support Iraq anew as it did between 1980 and 1988, and the Gulf region will turn again into an arena of Iraqi-Iranian polarization. This will turn small states such as Kuwait, Qatar, and Bahrain into delicious hazelnuts served on the table.

All signs indicate that the United States, France, and China—and probably Britain within a short period of time—want to see an Iraq that is territorially and politically united, and that is returning to the world community during the next year. With the return of Iraq to the international arena, Kuwait should arm itself with strategic vision and farsightedness. Kuwait should diversify its Gulf, Arab, and international options and alternatives. It should be cautious not to put all its eggs in the American basket. It is a mistake to believe that the (agreements) we have with the United States forces it to defend Kuwait in case of external danger. What we have are (security arrangements) which mean an agreement between the U.S. and Kuwaiti administrations—without the endorsement of parliaments—which give the U.S. Administration the power to assess whether there is a necessity to intervene to protect Kuwait or not, in accordance with the American perception at that time.

Kuwait should expeditiously move to arrange its Gulf and Arab relations before finding itself in a situation in which regret is of no use.

Estonia's President Leaves After Official Visit

LD0712115893 Kuwait Radio Kuwait in Arabic 1000 GMT 7 Dec 93

[Text] Estonian President Meri Lennart and the delegation accompanying him left Kuwait international airport at 1000 this morning after a three-day official visit to Kuwait.

The amir of Kuwait, the heir apparent and chairman of the Council of Ministers, the speaker of the National Assembly, the first deputy prime minister and foreign minister, ministers, governors, senior army, police and national guard officers, and the doyen of the diplomatic corps saw the Estonian president off.

Oman

Royal Decrees Grant Minister's Rank to Officials

JN0712215693 Muscat Radio Oman Network in Arabic 1300 GMT 7 Dec 93

[Text] His Majesty Sultan Qabus Bin-Sa'id, may God preserve him, has issued five royal decrees as follows:

Royal Decree No. 73/93 grants His Highness As'ad Bin-Tariq Al Sa'id the rank of a minister and appoints him secretary general of the Conferences Higher Committee.

Royal Decree No. 74/93 grants Shaykh Muhammad Bin-Marhub Bin-Salim al-Ma'mari the rank of a minister and appoints him head of the general establishment for youths' sports and cultural activities.

Royal Decree No. 75/93 appoints Nayif Bin-'Ubayd al-Salami as ambassador at the Foreign Ministry and transfers him from the general body for youths' sports and cultural activities.

Royal Decree No. 76/93 appoints Dr. (?Abu-Quayn Talib Bin-'Ali al-Kinani) as economic adviser at the Sultanate Court and transfers him from the Trade and Industry Ministry. The decree also appoints him as member of the development council and the financial affairs council.

Royal Decree No. 77/93 appoints Shaykh Sayf Bin-Hashim al-Maskari as under secretary of the Trade and Industry Ministry.

Qatar

Heir Apparent Receives U.S. Official Wisner

JN0712122893 Manama WAKH in Arabic 1054 GMT 7 Dec 93

[Text] Doha, 7 Dec (WAKH)—His Highness Shaykh Hamad Bin-Khalifah Al Thani, Qatari heir apparent and defense minister, today received Frank Wisner, U.S. under secretary of defense for general policy.

During the meeting, the two officials reviewed bilateral relations and discussed a number of regional and international issues. They also exchanged views on a number of issues of joint interest.

Yemen

Al-Bid Urges Resignations, on 18-Point Plan

JN0812123193 Manama WAKH in Arabic 1100 GMT 8 Dec 92

[Text] Al-Shariqah, 8 Dec (WAKH)—Yemeni Vice President 'Ali Salim al-Bid has proposed that both he and President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih resign their posts in a last attempt to save Yemen's unity. In a statement to AL-KHALIJ newspaper published today, al-Bid said: There is only one step left for us to resolve the crisis; namely, I and the president withdraw instead of fighting and quarreling. In Yemen, he added, there is no Mohdi, no Aidid, in a reference to Somali warlords.

Al-Bid stressed that the Yemeni leadership could not comprehend unity. Therefore, he added, the people, with all their factions, should be given the opportunity to work to achieve unity.

Al-Bid called for the withdrawal of the army, reform of judiciary, implementation of local government, and trial of outlaws.

Al-Bid said that he presented a 18-item plan for resolving the political crisis, adding that he is ready to discuss it in detail with the Yemeni leadership to reach a comprehensive solution to the crisis.

The Yemeni vice president denied that he held side talks with American officials while he was in the United States. He said that he went to the United States for treatment and that the only meeting he held with U.S. officials there was with the U.S. vice president, describing it as a courtesy meeting only.

Basindwah Opposes Federation, on Western Concern

JN0712185893 London AL-WASAT in Arabic 6-12 Dec 93 pp 22-24

[Interview with Yemeni Foreign Minister Muhammad Salim Basindwah by 'Abd-al-Wahhab al-Mu'ayyad, in Sanaa—date not given]

[Excerpts] [Al-Mu'ayyad] To start with, what is your opinion about the recent Yemeni Socialist Party's [YSP] initiative concerning the federation option as a solution to the crisis, and to safeguard unity? Does this option apply to the political situation in Yemen?

[Basindwah] My opinion is that the implementation of the federal system, as we know, usually constitutes a political framework that is applicable in limited cases, including two major cases: The first is that a federation can be established between two different peoples; and the second case is that it can be applied to one people with different religions and ethnic groups. However, when you have one people and one homeland, as in Yemen, where the citizens have the same affiliations, origin, religion, and history, then a federation proposal means returning Yemen to the eras of division and partition. Some people may think that federation means local government, but, the truth is that it is something different. Local government does not conflict with merger, but federation, in our case, contradicts the direct natural relationship that exists among all the sons of the one homeland. I would like to mention something that has been true for dozens of years; namely that what has kept Yemeni unity alive and vital throughout the past, despite the fact that division continued for more than a century, is the Yemeni's deep sense of national affiliation.

[Al-Mu'ayyad] Some Western states, particularly the United States, showed some concern over the crisis. How do you interpret this? How do these states view the crisis and its causes? Do they have any proposals to settle the crisis and are they ready to contribute to settling it?

[Basindwah] Their concern over what is taking place in Yemen could be attributed to their concern about security and stability in the entire region. Maybe it is because these states realize that what is taking place in Yemen could affect the Arabian Peninsula states, which have the biggest oil reserve in the world. This is in addition to the fact that the Republic of Yemen itself has huge mineral resources; something which makes it good for more Western investments and a promising market for the products of the industrialized states. This is also in addition to our country's important and strategic location. I do not think that the Western states want democracy in our country to fail and to suffer a setback. This is because such a thing would deal a blow to U.S. and Western efforts to spread liberal democracy in the whole world. However, these friendly states' concern was confined to issuing statements in which they expressed concern about safeguarding Yemen's unity and democratic system and approach, about abiding by market economy, and about respecting human rights. We thank the United States because it presented advice and stressed the need for respecting constitutional legitimacy and for settling all differences through dialogue and by renouncing the use of force.

I cannot answer your question on how these Western countries view the crisis and its reasons because only the spokesmen for these governments are able to do that. I do not have any information that any of these countries, except for the United States, have presented specific proposals to deal with the crisis or to contribute to resolving it. We thank these countries, led by the United States, for their positions, and we thank the eagerness they show to spare our country any dangers, and their concern for its unity, the continuation of our democratic march, and for stability, security, and peace in Yemen as a whole. [passage omitted]

[Al-Mu'ayyad] What are the contents of the messages that you conveyed to Arab capitals, the last of which

were Cairo and Damascus, and what are the results of your talks with the Egyptian and Syrian presidents and officials?

[Basindwah] My recent visits to Cairo and Damascus sought to convey verbal messages from brother Lieutenant General 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih, Presidential Council chairman, to his brothers Presidents Husni Mubarak and Hafiz al-Asad to assure them that the crisis in our country is on its way to being solved, God willing, and that the differences, regardless of their size, will never lead to any armed conflict. The messages also emphasized that all parties are determined to rule out the use of force, and are committed to work to resolve their differences through dialogue. The visits to Cairo and Damascus also sought to emphasize Yemen's eagerness to bolster relations with Egypt and Syria in light of the importance of these two countries. [passage omitted]

[Al-Mu'ayyad] What are the results of Jordan's efforts? Is the idea of a meeting between the president and his deputy still valid? What is the view of the president on this proposal? Is it a Jordanian or Yemeni proposal?

[Basindwah] I have no information about this other than the fact that Jordan has tried to mediate, but its effort were not successful. As far as I know, no meeting will be held between the president and his deputy in Amman.

[Al-Mu'ayyad] What about the efforts of brothers in other countries of the region?

[Basindwah] Any effort by brothers in countries of the region will be welcomed and appreciated, although I think that we as Yemenis are able to resolve our differences and problems by ourselves.

[Al-Mu'ayyad] Reports said that Western countries have threatened to employ pressures on both sides of the crisis if they do not work for resolving it through dialogue. How true are these reports? What is the nature of these pressures? Is it true that some of these pressures are economic ones?

[Basindwah] I have never heard of threats by Western countries to employ pressures on any party. I do not think that there is a country that is unaware that resorting to economic pressures will not help to resolve the crisis, in addition to the fact that the harm will be inflicted on citizens. Therefore, I do not imagine that any country would think of resorting to such a step. [passage omitted]

Trial of 'Jihad' Terrorists Begins After Delays

PM0812113593 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 5 Dec 93 p 1

[Lutfi Shatarah report: "Jihad Trials Begin in Lahij in Yemen"]

[Text] Aden—The trials of six [as published] members of the outlawed "Jihad" organization have begun in Yemen's Lahij Governorate. They are accused of involvement in the bombing operations on government premises and of possessing arms and explosives without a license—charges punishable under Article 226 of the penal code. These are all activities classified as crimes. Punishment for them ranges from 5 years' imprisonment to the death sentence, with money confiscated in both cases.

Judicial sources have said that the seven defendants are: Ahmad Salih 'Abd-al-Karim, Zubayd Muhammad Sharaf, 'Abdallah Ja'far Duhays, Sa'id Ja'far Duhays, Mahmud Nasir Ahmad al-Ka'madi, Muhammad Sa'id al-'Uwayni, and Muhammad Ja'far Duhays.

The bill of indictment submitted to al-Hawtah court in Lahij Governorate stipulates the following points:

— the "Jihad" organization was formed with the intention of committing terrorist actions to topple the national regime and replace it with another regime;

— the movements of Muhammad Rashid Nasir, the governorate secretary, were closely watched in preparation for assassinating him;

— the accused possessed and stockpiled and were trained in the use of weapons and ammunition;

— eleven detonators ready for use and other weapons, including 10 RPG launchers and 10 other pieces were seized from defendants Ahmad Salih 'Abd-al-Karim and Zubayd Muhammad Sharaf.

This is the first trial of the Yemen "Jihad" organization, which stepped up its activities late last year and early this year against political figures. This is in addition to bombing operations against tourist hotels and some government installations.

The sources added that the criminal investigation department in Aden Governorate has completed the preparation of the files concerning the defendants belonging to the organization who are held in al-Mansurah central prison in the governorate. This is in addition to the files of those who managed to escape from the same prison early in August. They include Jamal al-Hindi, leader of the organization's military wing. The sources said that they will be tried in absentia after referring their case to the court.

Security sources point out that the delay in starting the trial is attributable to the general prosecution office's delay in arranging the trials for fear that "Jihad" organization members might escalate their activities against jurists in civilian courts. A proposal to set up military courts to examine these cases is still under consideration.

Former Military Intelligence Chief Said Arrested

PM0712131393 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 4 Dec 93 p 1

[Fahd al-Tayyash report: "Arrests Campaign in Iraq Includes Former Chief of Military Intelligence"]

[Text] Amman—Informed Iraqi sources arriving from Iraq have stated that former Chief of Iraqi Military Intelligence Brigadier General Khalil al-'Izzawi has been arrested on a charge of bringing a number of military figures together in a bloc and holding meetings with them.

The sources added that also two members of the Ba'th Party's Regional Command have been suspended. They are Faysal Shahir, the official in charge of the Student and Youth Bureau, who comes from the town of al-Hadithah in western Iraq, and Fawzi al-Zurayq, who comes from Tikrit and was once party official in charge of some towns in southern Iraq.

It is believed that these two had ties to the officers who were arrested or executed last July.

The same sources confirmed the existence of differences between Fawzi al-Zurayq and 'Udayy Saddam Husayn, son of the Iraqi president, because of conflicts in their work in the youth sectors.

Travelers from Iraq have also confirmed that al-Zurayq and Shahir have been placed under house arrest. It should be recalled that al-Zurayq was the official responsible for the Ba'th Party in Kuwait in the late eighties.

Three Killed in Karkuk; Executed Officers Listed

NC0712174293 (Clandestine) Voice of Iraqi Islamic Revolution in Arabic 1430 GMT 7 Dec 93

[Text] Three regime intelligence and security elements were killed in Karkuk last week. They were shot by three people using revolvers equipped with silencers. The attackers left leaflets saying that a Turkoman organization was responsible.

Sources said armed groups have established checkpoints along the Tuz-al-Khalis road [in the north] at night. They inspect cars looking for security, intelligence, and Army officers. A captain and three security elements heading for Karkuk were arrested.

Elsewhere, sources close to the tyrant regime revealed the names of other officers executed by the tyrant on charges of involvement in the latest coup attempt against the head of the regime. The executed officers worked at the Armor Camp in Tikrit and at the al-Rashid Air Base in Baghdad. The names include: Pilot Jabbar Husayn Ra'd, a colonel; Pilot 'Abd-al-Shafiq Hamdan, a staff major; Infantry Colonel Iz'ayyil 'Abd-al-Shafi' 'Awwad; Infantry Captain Basim Muhammad Ibrahim; First Lieutenant Saddam Hasan Humud; Major Rif'at Sulayman Hamad; Staff Colonel Karim Salman Ibrahim; Zayn-al-'Abidin Sadiq Amin; Anwar 'Umar 'Uthman; and Colonel 'Abd-al-Warith Mustafa Samad, a pilot.

The sources said the officers were executed in Tikrit, where most of them came from.

Detainees Said Taken to 2 New Jails

NC0712180793 (Clandestine) Voice of Iraqi Islamic Revolution in Arabic 1430 GMT 7 Dec 93

[Text] Our sources stress that tyrant Saddam's regime, with its prisons full of Iraqi victims, opened two new detention centers similar to the al-Radwaniyah jail early last month. They are located near the border with Syria and Jordan in al-Ramadi Governorate. Our sources explain that one of the centers is located at oil station K-2, which previously pumped oil to the Iraqi-Syrian pipeline, but has not operated for years. The other center is at station H-3 on the road leading to the Jordanian border.

Our sources say hundreds of detainees from the south, particularly the marshlands, were taken to the two desert jails.

Hamid Majid Musa Elected Communist Party Leader

JN0712114193 Amman AL-AHALI in Arabic 6 Dec 93 p 5

[Excerpts] The Iraqi Communist Party convened its fifth congress in Shaqlawah in the Kurdistan Governorate of Irbil from 12 to 25 October, 1993. The congress was held under the slogan "Let's Rouse our People to Action, Get Sanctions off our People's Backs, Set up a United, Democratic, Federal Iraq, and Defend Toilers' Interests." [passage omitted]

The concept of democracy and rejuvenation apparently took center stage in the participants' discussions. The congress concluded with the election of a new central committee comprised of over half of the congress members. In its first session after the conclusion of the congress, the central committee elected a political bureau and Mr. Hamid Majid Musa as its secretary general by a unanimous vote. [passage omitted]

INA Says Old Bomb Explodes, Kills Child

JN0712174693 Baghdad INA in English 1350 GMT 7 Dec 93

[Text] Baghdad, Dec 7, INA—A child was reported killed and eight children and a boy were reported injured in an explosion of a bomb dropped by the American-British and French planes on the southern province of Dhi qar during the 30-state aggression on Iraq in 1991.

INA correspondent reported that the child victim was an 11-year-old girl in the primary school and that of those injured, four of them were her sisters and brothers.

Private Sector To Be Paid in Foreign Currency

JN0712213593 Baghdad BABIL in Arabic 4 Dec 93 p 1

[Text] BABIL has learned that the Council of Ministers has asked the ministries and other departments to conduct their transactions with the private sector in foreign currency. This will enable the private sector to import the necessary materials for production. In return, the private sector will pledge to give the government agency—with which it is doing business—a percentage of its products, including food items listed on the ration card. This percentage should exceed the quantity that can be imported at the same cost.

Defense Minister Opens Rebuilt Tank Repair Plant

JN0712212293 Baghdad AL-'IRAQ in Arabic 3 Dec 93 p 2

[Excerpt] Baghdad, INA—Defense Minister Staff General 'Ali Hasan al-Majid yesterday inaugurated the tank repair plant, which was rebuilt by members from the electromechanical engineering and military works units, in cooperation with the al-Faw Public Enterprise. [passage omitted]

Regime Intelligence Service in Moscow Alters

NC0712170693 (Clandestine) Voice of Iraqi Islamic Revolution in Arabic 1430 GMT 7 Dec 93

[Text] One month after the Saddamite measure in Moscow, the regime took another step, introducing major changes to its intelligence service in the Russian capital. 'Abd-al-Hamid Yasin, intelligence representative at the embassy, was recalled to Baghdad and replaced by Salih 'Abd-al-Rahman, intelligence representative in London for about 10 years. Munif 'Abdallah, the official in charge of the Russian section at the Iraqi intelligence service in Baghdad, was appointed director of the embassy's intelligence station.

Intelligence officer Isma'il Mahmud al-'Ani was appointed to the cultural section of the Moscow Embassy. He is tasked to handle Iraqi students in Moscow, most of whom sought refuge in Europe and refused to return to Iraq because of the deteriorating living and security conditions there. The regime's ambassador in Moscow, Ghafil Jasim al-Tikriti, was transferred to Baghdad and replaced by Hasan Fahmi Jum'ah, a former aide to the regime and minister of agriculture in the government of former President Ahmad Hasan al- Bakr.

Second Ship Docks at Umm-Qasr 7 Dec

JN0712123993 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1212 GMT 7 Dec 93

[Excerpt] Al-Basrah, 7 Dec (INA)—A ship carrying a substantial quantity of rice docked at the Port of Umm-Qasr today, the second vessel to do so since the iniquitous sanctions were imposed on the Iraqi people.

On hand to greet the Greek ship Kafo Briamits [name as received] were personnel from the Ministries of Trade and Transport and Communications.

An Iraqi News Agency correspondent on the spot reports that immediately upon the vessel's arrival at 1130 today, crews of the Public Enterprise of the Iraqi Ports began unloading the rice, and then moving it to the Ministry of Trade warehouses in the country's governorates on trucks of the Public Enterprise of Overland Transport and on railway trains. [passage omitted]

Rights Committee To Approach IPU Over Sanctions

JN0712113593 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0956 GMT 7 Dec 93

[Text] Baghdad, 7 Dec (INA)—The Iraqi National Assembly's Human Rights Committee has drafted a document spelling out the risks involved in the continuation of the economic blockade and listing the number of dead among children, the sick, and the elderly.

Emerging from a committee meeting held today, its chairman told the Iraqi News Agency the session studied the impact of over three years of sanctions on the social and physical wellbeing of the Iraqi people. The committee chairman noted that the UN Security Council has been deflected from its proper responsibilities since it was taken over by certain permanent members.

The document will be brought to the attention of the International Parliamentary Union [IPU], among other organizations, so that it may prevail on the Security Council to lift the iniquitous blockade, said the chairman.

'Facilities' for Aircraft Reported to Arab League

JN0712135793 Baghdad Republic of Iraq Radio Network in Arabic 1130 GMT 7 Dec 93

[Text] Iraq has informed the Arab League that the Saudi and Kuwaiti rulers continue to provide base facilities for American, British, and French aircraft violating Iraqi airspace, thereby putting Iraq's security and sovereignty at serious risk.

A letter from Iraq's permanent Arab League delegate to Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid, the league's secretary general, adds: On Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday, these aircraft mounted 125 hostile sorties, having taken off from bases in Saudi Arabia and Kuwait. He called for this letter, accompanied by a list of the violations, to be circulated among the league members.

Oil Minister Leaves For OAPEC Session in Syria

JN0712093193 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0857 GMT 7 Dec 93

[Text] Baghdad, 7 Dec (INA)—Oil Minister Safa' Hadi Jawad has left Baghdad for Damascus leading an Iraqi

delegation to the 51st session of the ministerial council of the Organization of Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries [OAPEC] scheduled to open there tomorrow.

The meeting will work out a plan of action for OAPEC and related agencies.

Commentary on Qatari 'Rapprochement' With Regime

NC0712173493 (Clandestine) Voice of Iraqi Islamic Revolution in Arabic 1450 GMT 7 Dec 93

[Station commentary]

[Text] The visit to Baghdad by the Qatari assistant Army chief of staff surprised observers and stirred angry reaction among the sons of the Iraqi people. The people hoped the brothers in Qatar would stand by them in their ordeal as they face the repressive and terrorist practices of the regime.

Remarkably, the visit coincides with a genocide campaign carried out by the tyrant regime against our folk in Iraq's marshlands. The visit also coincides with a media campaign in which the regime expresses its hostile intentions toward Gulf countries and declares its readiness to invade sisterly Kuwait again.

The regime's press continue their unabashed attacks against Gulf states. The regime's unrestrained attacks against these countries confirm the opinion of several political analysts following developments involving Iraq. These analysts believe that the regime bases its survival on the considerations of a regional balance of power that coincides with its own political priorities. These considerations favor continuing the status quo in Iraq and excluding the majority from participating in power.

The regime's media campaign against Gulf countries and its repeated expression of readiness to launch into political adventures to upset the region's security are merely a method of political blackmail, one that the regime has long used with the rulers of Gulf countries. The regime, as it pursues its venomous aims, banks on a legacy of imagined regional fears. Among these is the fear that genuine popular change would lead to the oppressed majority restoring its denied political rights.

Our valiant people imagined that the lesson of Saddam's invasion of Kuwait and its threats to invade the rest of the Gulf emirates would dispel the illusions and fears that the regime successfully nurtured in all those countries that sympathized with it during its aggressive war against the Islamic Republic of Iran. The Iraqi occupation of Kuwait unveiled the real danger that brings fear and insecurity to the region, namely Saddam's regime, which postured as the champion of Gulf security.

Regrettably, these imagined fears remain alive in the hearts of Gulf officials. The proof lies in the Qatari rapprochement with the tyrant's ostracized regime and the meek Gulf reaction to the massacres the regime is committing against our folk throughout Iraq, particularly in the south.

We would like to remind our brothers in the Gulf countries of the perils posed to Gulf security by Saddam continuing in power. We would also like to remind them of their fraternal Arab and Islamic obligations to our suffering folk in ravaged Iraq.

U.S. Proposals for Syria Agreement Revealed

TA0712150193 Jerusalem AL-MANAR in Arabic 6 Dec 93 p 1

[Text] U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher's tour of the region is seeking to invigorate the talks on the Syrian track and has no connection with the Palestinian-Israeli track. AL-MANAR has learned from diplomatic sources that Israel is insisting on opening a secret channel with Damascus, whereas Damascus is insisting on full U.S. sponsorship.

These sources add that Christopher has brought with him proposals that contain the following clauses:

—Withdrawal of Israeli forces from the Golan Heights to be carried out in three stages.
—Damascus will gradually take over civilian powers.
—Joint Syrian-Israeli patrols will operate until the third and final stage.
—After the signing of this agreement, ambassadors will be exchanged and joint industrial projects will be established by the two countries.
—International forces will be stationed on both sides of the border.
—A U.S. military base and U.S. warning stations will be set up.
—Damascus will help conclude an agreement between Israel and Lebanon.
—Damascus will undertake to stop acts of violence against Israel and halt the activities of radical organizations.
—Frontier modifications will be made in conformity with Israel's security.

Rabinovich 'Delighted' Syria Coming Back to Table

TA0812065693 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 0500 GMT 8 Dec 93

[Text] Israel's ambassador to the United States, Itamar Rabinovich, says the September 13 signing of the Israel-PLO accord was a shock to Syria and caused a breakdown in bilateral talks, but he told Jack Katzenell why he expects Israeli-Syrian negotiations to resume.

[Begin recording] [Rabinovich] I think that Syria has a very important interest in being part of the peace talks. I think it is unfortunate that the Syrians kept themselves away from the bargaining table for three months now, and I am delighted that they are coming back.

[Katzenell] They were demanding that Israel make a prior commitment to total withdrawal. Israel has not made this commitment.

[Rabinovich] Well the Syrians never actually demanded that explicitly although there were hints to that effect in the media, and if such hints existed they were unrealistic and I am delighted again that we are in a realistic and not an unrealistic phase.

[Katzenell] What do you think has made the difference?

[Rabinovich] I think that September 13th was a shock in a way. There is an after shock and then there is a return to a more standard pattern. I think that we, or the Syrians in this case, are returning to the more standard pattern. [end recording]

Peres Views Impending Meeting With 'Arafat

TA0812065193 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 0500 GMT 8 Dec 93

[Text] Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres says he does not expect any political breakthroughs to come out of his meeting with PLO leader Yasir 'Arafat in Geneva tomorrow. Speaking at a reception in Tel Aviv last night to mark publication of his book on the peace process, Peres told Jack Katzenell he was not sure President Weizman's proposal for a national unity government would work.

[Begin recording] [Peres] I do not see that the parties on the right will agree to the policy we have adopted, and I do not believe that we are going to change our policies.

[Katzenell] Do you think that on Thursday [9 December] we are going to hear an announcement from Secretary Christopher that Syria has agreed to return to the bilateral talks?

[Peres] There is a fair chance for it, yes.

[Katzenell] Just a word about your forthcoming meeting with Yasir 'Arafat. What do you think will be achieved?

[Peres] I do not plan to achieve anything. It is not a negotiation. The purpose of the meeting is cultural rather than political, and what I hope is that the poets and intellectuals of our two nations, of our two peoples actually, will try to do their outmost to create a new air, a new atmosphere.

[Katzenell] I heard that the meeting was your idea. Is that correct, sir?

[Peres] The meeting with whom?

[Katzenell] The conference of the intellectuals.

[Peres] Yes.

[Katzenell] Is this your private version of Chinese ping-pong diplomacy?

[Peres] Yes. I suggested it to UNESCO a year ago.

[Katzenell] That was before Oslo?

[Peres] Yes, a long time before Oslo.

[Katzenell] And did you hope that it would generate something political?

[Peres] Well, the spiritual side and the psychological side is part of the political structure. [end recording]

IDF 'Significantly' Beefs Up Territories' Troops

TA0712191693 Jerusalem Israel Television Channel 1 Network in Hebrew 1800 GMT 7 Dec 93

[Announcer-read report]

[Text] Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin has ordered the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] to very significantly beef up its forces in the territories. Our army affairs correspondent Alon Ben-David reports that, since last night, dozens of Army companies are being sent to Judaea and Samaria. The number of IDF troops deployed in the territories today exceeds anything seen there over the past several years. Dozens of vehicles were brought to the territories, with which the Army will maintain a very high profile on the roads. The troops were ordered to be very active in areas where there are chances of friction between the Jewish and the Arabic populations. The build-up was decided on last night in a meeting Rabin held with Lieutenant General Ehud Baraq, the chief of staff.

IDF Said Not Hindered By Political Considerations

TA0812061893 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0505 GMT 8 Dec 93

[Text] Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin has vehemently rejected allegations that the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] and the security forces are hampered in their battle against terrorism by political considerations. The prime minister called this a blatant lie.

[Begin Rabin recording] We will continue the negotiations in order to implement an agreement which we have already reached. At the same time, we will keep on fighting terrorism. We shall negotiate for peace, while terrorism continues. We will wage a relentless war against terrorism, and all the talk about the IDF or the other security forces being prevented by political considerations from employing all their force against terrorism is a blatant lie. The only factor limiting the activities of the IDF and the other security forces is the law. We are a state of law. The IDF protects the settlers and the settlements a hundred times more than these settlements protect the State of Israel. [end recording]

Hamas Threatens Baraq; Gaza Shaykh Murdered

TA0712121493 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1100 GMT 7 Dec 93

[Excerpts] 'Izz-al-Din al-Qassam, the military arm of Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement], has announced that the attacks that claimed the lives of four Israelis in recent days were carried out by its members. A leaflet disseminated in Gaza by the organization says that if Chief of Staff Ehud Baraq does not resign, they will assassinate him. The leaflet further states that to avenge the death of its men, 'Izz-al-Din al-Qassam will henceforth attack settlers rather than soldiers. [passage omitted]

Settlers set fire to a gas station in the vicinity of the 'Eli junction in Samaria last night. Station owner Hamid Darghamah told our correspondent Moti Amir that this is the second time settlers set his gas station on fire, destroying it. He said the settlers' actions caused the gas company to refuse to replace his gas pumps.

Shaykh Khalid Saqqallah, 45, was murdered in Gaza this morning. He was shot by three masked men in the doorway of his shop. Our correspondent Moti Amir reports that he had served five years in prison for membership in Fatah.

'Terrorist' Wounds Israeli Near Rachel's Tomb

TA0812075293 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0745 GMT 8 Dec 93

[Text] There was a terrorist attack approximately 30 minutes ago near Rachel's Tomb south of Jerusalem. One man, a resident of the 'Etzyon Bloc, sustained moderate to serious gunshot wounds in the attack. Our correspondent Moti Amir reports that two Israeli citizens entered a shop in the vicinity of Rachel's Tomb in order to buy pita bread. An Arab man carrying a revolver followed them into the shop. When the Israeli turned around, the Arab shot him in the stomach. The terrorist then fled from the scene together with an accomplice. Our correspondent notes that an IDF [Israel Defense Forces] outpost is situated a short distance from the scene of the attack. The security forces have launched searches for the assailants. As reported earlier, a resident of the 'Etzyon Bloc was wounded near Rachel's Tomb and he is currently receiving medical treatment at the site.

Stonethrowers Wounded; PFLP Members Arrested

TA0812065493 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 0500 GMT 8 Dec 93

[Excerpts] Fifty-six year-old Mordekhay Lapid and his 19-year-old son Shalom, killed in Monday's [6 December] terrorist attack near Hebron were buried last night at the Hebron cemetery. Thousands took part in the eight-hour funeral procession which left Bene Baraq in the afternoon and made its way via Jerusalem to Hebron. Some stone throwing incidents were reported as the cortege passed through Bethlehem and Hebron. Soldiers accompanying the procession opened fire, and in Bethlehem, three stonethrowers were wounded. [passage omitted]

Security forces last night and this morning arrested dozens of intifadah activists, most from the Popular Front [PFLP] group in and around Bethlehem, Hebron, Nabulus, and Ramallah. The action came ahead of the sixth anniversary of the Palestinian uprising tomorrow. [passage omitted]

Police Minister Comments on Riots, Detainees

NC0712154293 Cairo AL-AHRAM in Arabic 1 Dec 93 p 5

[Interview with Police Affairs Minister Moshe Shahal by Amirah Hasan in Jerusalem; date not given]

[Text] [Hasan] Soldiers in the occupied territories have admitted that they cannot stop the settlers from attacking the Palestinians. Who, in your view, is responsible for the protection of the Palestinians and what is the role of the police?

[Shahal] First, it should be realized that the police are not responsible for confronting rioting in areas that are under the control of the military administration. This is the Army's responsibility. As to the police in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, their role is limited to carrying out investigations and ensuring that orders are carried out and that laws are applied. But maintaining order is not their job.

I presented the prime minister with a proposal that a nonmilitary solution be found to the problems that have erupted between the Palestinians and Israelis and that the police be given the authority to confront all problems concerned with keeping the lands and roads open. But until the government decides on this matter, the police will continue to not be responsible for deterring the settlers' actions.

[Hasan] The solution then is to let the settlers continue to attack the Palestinians daily?

[Shahal] Israel is a state that upholds law and order and is extremely sensitive to the issue of public security. Israel is committed to the issue of maintaining security. In fact, we have started to beef up the police force so that it can support Army forces in their responsibilities. The Army has also received clear instructions to resolve all these issues.

On the other hand, the Palestinian groups opposed to the peace process and that are working to wreck it by creating chaos should also shoulder responsibility for the issue of maintaining security.

[Amirah] But the situation in the occupied territories is different because Israel is the occupier and is therefore responsible for security and the situation.

[Shahal] The Palestinian inhabitants have to condemn the riots and chaos that are being initiated by these groups. This is important even if it is just symbolic condemnation. They should do it just like the Israeli Government, which condemns the riots by the settlers. The government will fulfill its commitments and no Palestinian will be jailed without trial so that we can prevent such actions. The Knesset immediately condemned these actions and the police and Army tried to search for the perpetrators to bring them to trial.

It is not a question of whether to condemn or not. There is an agreement. We carried out one step and want to implement it with the Palestinians because we have a common interest in doing so. But the Palestinian people have not proved their desire to do so yet and this is very important for Israeli public opinion. Real peace is not between Rabin and 'Arafat but between the two peoples. I have spoken to the Palestinian leaders in the territories to encourage them to say what they really believe in public without fear of the extremists.

[Amirah] Will the government pay compensation to the Palestinians attacked by the settlers?

[Shahal] Paying compensation means shouldering responsibility for these actions. The persons who carried out these actions did so outside the law and it is our duty to try them. The police are working with the government's legal adviser to find the perpetrators within days or even within hours.

[Hasan] Have the obstacles impeding the release of the remaining Palestinian detainees been removed?

[Shahal] There is no link between the negotiations and the release of political detainees. The Palestinians have concluded an agreement in their own interest and not for the sake of releasing the detainees. But there will be a distinction between the kinds of actions that led to the detention of the Palestinians. The ones who were arrested because they belonged to a hostile organization will be released because Israel recognizes this organization today and therefore there is no place for this crime now. Those convicted of committing crimes will not be released.

[Hasan] What about crimes where stones and Molotov cocktails are thrown? Will those convicted of such crimes be released, and when?

[Shahal] I think so. They will be released as progress is made in the negotiations.

[Hasan] Why do you link the progress in negotiations with the release of detainees?

[Shahal] We link the progress in negotiations with the release of the detainees because we are responsible for maintaining security and do not wish to commit suicide. We seek good relations with our neighbors, the Palestinians, but this is a matter that calls for commitment on both sides.

[Hasan] Will political detainees be released now or not?

[Shahal] I do not know if they will be released soon. However, this matter is being studied. We are holding negotiations on this matter. We are doing what is possible. A number of them are supposed to be released.

[Hasan] How about releasing detainees from Hamas and the Islamic Jihad? I am not referring to those who committed murders.

[Shahal] No individual who committed an act, stood trial because of it, and says that if released he will repeat the same act can be released by any country in the world because he may do it again within one hour of his release.

[Hasan] What about those Hamas and Islamic Jihad detainees who have not committed murder? Will they be released?

[Shahal] Why should they be released?

[Hasan] You are the minister. I am asking you a question.

[Shahal] If those detainees make it clear that they will perpetrate the same acts after their release, why should we release them? Even Fatah is not interested in their release.

[Hasan] So, you will only release those who support peace?

[Shahal] Yes, of course. The situation is different for those willing to maintain order.

[Hasan] Has a decision been made to release Shaykh Ahmad Yasin, leader of the Hamas Movement?

[Shahal] I do not want to discuss this matter. But he is in good condition and in jail right now.

[Hasan] What recommendations will you make concerning Yasir 'Arafat's call for the release of Shaykh Yasin?

[Shahal] I will not announce my recommendations through the media. The matter should be studied in an objective way.

[Hasan] Will Shaykh Yasin be released?

[Shahal] I do not know. We have to look at the matter from all angles. We want the assistance of Palestinians who support peace and want to consolidate it in the territories.

[Hasan] You have proposed the deployment of police to replace the Army in the self-rule areas. What is the reason?

[Shahal] The police are responsible for maintaining order, applying the law, and executing orders. The police, a civilian service, are trained to carry out these responsibilities. I think that this measure will help enhance cooperation between the Palestinian and Israeli police and alleviate tension.

Weizman on Call for National Unity Government

TA0812101493 Jerusalem Israel Television Channel 1 Network in Hebrew 1800 GMT 7 Dec 93

["Special" interview with President 'Ezer Weizman by political correspondent Gadi Sukenik at the president's residence in Jerusalem and Anchorman Hayim Yavin in the studio—live]

[Text] [Yavin] Good evening, Mr. President.

[Weizman] Good evening.

[Yavin] At times of crisis like this we have always looked to the president as the supreme authority. Today, you called for a national unity government. Is that the solution now, with the political negotiations and the peace process featuring so prominently on the agenda?

[Weizman] That is certainly the case. But first of all, I would like to issue my condolences to the Lapid family from Hebron, who as we speak are burying their father and brother. May they rest in peace. Look, war and peace must both have a wide base of public support. We already witnessed this during the 1967 war when Menahem Begin was brought into the government for the first time in order to recruit widespread public support for war. Afterwards, at Camp David, Begin won a majority because the Labor party, despite its being in the opposition, voted in favor of the agreement which enabled Begin to win 84 Knesset members [MK's]. Today, we have a very narrow base of support. The situation is one of distress. Most of the citizens feel that they do not know exactly what is happening. At this opportunity, I believe that the people should receive a more detailed explanation of the agreement and exactly what we are heading towards. One must admit that the national mood is one of despondency because several extremely serious terrorist attacks have taken place since the agreement was signed. I got very little sleep last night thinking about what we should do. I told myself: you are the president of Israel. You are viewed as a unifying national force. What have you done to unify the nation? By living at the presidential residence and being nice to many people? I got up in the morning and decided to call on some of my colleagues, whom I know well, to help the government on its difficult and complex path. I invited MK Refa'el Eytan over for a chat. Our meeting was very interesting and fruitful. I especially invited MK Eytan because we go back a long way together and I thought that my request may possibly strike a chord with him.

[Sukenik] What did he say?

[Weizman] First of all, Refa'el Eytan did not say no. I will certainly not disclose the details of our conversation. I believe that MK Eytan is the kind of person that is ready to lend a shoulder at troublesome and distressful times.

[Sukenik] Do you see a possibility of Tzomet, with its 8 MK's, joining the government?

[Weizman] I am not speaking on behalf of Tzomet nor do I form governments. I appealed to MK Eytan because we are currently in dire straits and if a common denominator could be found....[pauses] Incidentally, Eytan was not the only one I invited. I also summoned [Likud faction chairman] MK Moshe Qatzav, who met with me at 1700 this afternoon, and [NRP leader] MK Zvulun Hammer to a similar discussion.

[Yavin] How did they react?

[Weizman] They each reacted differently; however, I would like to say that I hope that Israel's leaders understand that the public is tense, that people feel that they are being kept in the dark, and that no one knows exactly where we are heading. I reiterate that the government must do a better job of explaining things. I have tried to influence them to this effect, and I will continue to push for the greatest degree of unity. I know that some aspects seem slightly farfetched—such as how can one find a common denominator for such a difficult process; however, such things have happened before.

[Sukenik] Mr. President, it is precisely on this that I would like to ask you something. You said before that you do not form governments but that is exactly what you are doing. You are carrying out a political move that is generally made by prime ministers. You are trying to widen Prime Minister Rabin's narrow coalition base.

[Weizman] I assumed that you would ask me this question. I am not carrying out any political move. I am making a presidential effort to convince some of my former political colleagues to consider searching for a common denominator. I am not forming governments. I only invited some people for a meeting, and that is my job. If it is said that the president of Israel should be a unifying force, then that is what I tried to do today as much as possible.

[Yavin] But, Mr. President, but would not such a national unity government, whose main components of course would be the Likud and the Labor party, stop the peace process?

[Weizman] First of all, I did not say what the government's main components would be. Nor did I state that I was certain of being successful in my effort. I hope and very much recommend that I will indeed succeed. I do not think so, and I repeat that in the past, there have already been occasions when very complex governments, composed of numerous and disparate bodies, achieved great accomplishments. At this stage of the process, we have only signed an agreement of principle with the PLO. This is just the beginning, and I think that the Israeli Government, although perhaps not all of its members, will take a positive view of enjoying a wider and more solid base with which to pursue a very difficult process which has opponents both within the Arab world and inside Israel.

[Sukenik] Let me ask one question before we move on to the issue of the settlers and their safety. First of all, what about the actual effect? Most of the reactions we have heard until now range between almost total derision to outright rejection.

[Weizman] I have not heard anything yet that smacks of derision but perhaps if you continue speaking in such a derisive tone then others will follow suit.

[Sukenik] No. Some people said that they had no desire to insult the president and state things outright, however....

[Weizman, interrupting] Excuse, me but I have not heard that. My secretary has been sitting here for several hours receiving phone calls expressing support. A certain MK called me with words of encouragement and said that at one stage he had prepared a draft bill to abolish the presidency but now he was going to pull back his proposal. So, you can find your deriders but I can point to my supporters.

[Sukenik] Now, for the practical effects of this. You said you could not sleep all night because of the murder....

[Weizman] Not all the night, part of the night.

[Sukenik] Okay, so part of the night, because of this murder and lately there have been numerous murders of Jews.

[Weizman] I did not say it was because of the murder. I said it was because of the combination and accumulation of all these incidents and because of my sense of the public's feelings. I do not take a condescending view of the people and their feelings. My wife and I travel around quite a lot nowadays, including in the areas known as the territories. We have met with settlers on the Golan Heights, in Hebron, in the Jordan Rift Valley, in the Qatif Bloc, and they feel in distress. I do not condone the actions committed by some of them. I was pleased to hear Rabbi Druckman [settler leader] call for great restraint. However, they also feel basically abandoned to a certain extent. Several public figures have made regrettable statements that should not have been made.

[Sukenik] That is the question. Will widening the government and adding more of a right wing slant bolster the security of the settlers, or do you simply have reservations with the way the government is handling the security of both Jews and Arabs in the territories in general?

[Weizman] Look, I have my reservations but since I am not a political figure I will keep them to myself. I reject the terms right wing and left wing. I think that both the Labor party and the Likud incorporate a mixture of ideological persuasions. I am convinced that some members of the Likud may take a positive view of what I am trying to do. Former Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir has given me his support on this issue. I repeat: the move taken by the Israeli Government, which I wholeheartedly support, is no simple matter. We are trying to reach an agreement with an organization that has yet to prove itself, not with a sovereign state. There is great fear among the Israeli public and the opponents of the agreement in the Arab world are constantly causing damage with the aim of sabotaging the peace process.

[Yavin] Mr. President, what is your opinion of the statements made recently, for example by the attorney

general who said that the Council of Jewish Settlements in Judaea, Samaria, and the Gaza Strip is a seditious body, or the epithets hurled at the prime minister. What is your reaction to this? How can we stop these statements.

[Weizman] These very harmful expressions can be stopped by establishing a broader-based government, in which each component will balance out the other. There will then be less arguments over whether something is good or bad, and that is why I issued this call. I think that the attacks on the prime minister are very serious and several other people made totally unnecessary statements.

[Yavin] Do you think that the attorney general's statements were uncalled for?

[Weizman] One moment. I do not give grades to the attorney general. There are 150,000 Jewish residents in Judaea and Samaria. They were not sent there, nor did they go there, entirely on their own steam. Whoever takes a look at what they have here will immediately realize that the settlers did not set up everything by themselves but were helped by successive Israeli Governments. I was a member of Golda Meir's government 23 years ago when the late Yig'al Alon [former Labor party leader] came with the proposal to establish Qiryat Arba'. We all voted in favor of that proposal: Golda Me'ir, the late Moshe Dayan, Shim'on Peres, Yig'al Alon, myself and others. So one can say that we made a mistake but we cannot ignore the fact that certain people saw things differently in the past.

[Sukenik] It is understandable that you do not want to enumerate your reservations on the government's security policy in the territories. However, can you sympathize with the settlers' claims that they have been abandoned in the past few months?

[Weizman] Most definitely so, although this feeling is unjustified. It is like having a hospital patient who thinks something hurts and you have to prove that nothing is wrong. So let the government prove to the settlers that the IDF [Israel Defense Forces]—as I believe—is really doing all it can. I would like to take this opportunity to offer a word of praise to the IDF which is working very hard. The IDF, the people's army, is constantly on the streets. We just heard that they are going to send woman soldiers to deal with the Arab women. This afternoon, I spoke with a senior officer who told me that the IDF is in a constant state of preparedness to defend any Jew anywhere. If some people in the Jordan Rift Valley, or the Gaza Strip, or certainly in Hebron, feel differently then this must be changed. I am not coming with solutions nor do I presume to know what should be done. I am only saying that we must broaden the basis of the government whether it is by including Refa'el Eytan, the National Religious Party, or the Likud. The prime minister must take care of this. I have voiced my opinion and I hope that I have made some people take thought. I hope that people who respect the Israeli people, both inside and outside the Green Line, will not take a light view of what is happening today.

[Yavin] Mr. President, one last question. Is it not time to call a time out in the political process in order to reevaluate the situation?

[Weizman] No, no.

[Sukenik] Or perhaps conversely to expedite the process?

[Weizman] I will definitely not answer that. My opinion is that the rate of progress is very important in such complex processes. If we would not have gotten delayed during the peace process with Egypt 14 or 15 years ago—in March it will be 15 years since we signed the peace agreement with Egypt—then perhaps we would have less trouble today, but that is already spilt milk. I believe that any agreement that has been signed should be honored by both the government and the opposition. We have to try and influence things inside the government and one should definitely attempt to secure the widest possible base of support for the tough decisions the government will have to take, especially since the public is so confused. I definitely believe that a great deal of the people are confused. I appeal to the leaders of Israel to find a way to speak the same language and not to immediately issue statements from all sides—from the left wing, the right wing, the Labor party, and the Likud,—that a national unity government has no chance. If there is no chance to achieve unity then I am very doubtful that the much more difficult steps which lie ahead can be carried out with the present narrow base of support.

[Yavin] Mr. President, thank you very much for this interview.

Rabin on Weizman Proposal

TA0712163993 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1400 GMT 7 Dec 93

[Excerpts] President 'Ezer Weizman conferred with Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin this afternoon in an attempt to convince him to set up a national unity government. Our Knesset correspondent Tziyon Nanus reports:

The president is working for the establishment of a national unity government, but does not say so specifically, preferring to use the term unity among the people. He said this follows many appeals from citizens due to the latest wave of attacks. [passage omitted]

After the meeting, the prime minister did not sound excited about the idea. We are currently dealing with the war against terrorism, not setting up a unity government. Whoever wants to join can do so only on the basis of the current guidelines, Rabin said.

[Begin Rabin recording] If there is a readiness by others to join on that basis then the door is open to them and

there will be a dialogue. There have not been any approaches to me and I am not initiating anything. I suggest leaving any speculation aside since in practice I do not know about any Likud approach about possible cooperation. [end recording]

Despite Rabin's determination there are others who do not reject the idea. Tzomet leader Refa'el Eytan met with the president this morning and was also updated after the Rabin-Weizman meeting. A unity government is a possibility, Eytan said. [passage omitted]

[Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew at 1500 GMT on 7 December adds: "Minister Yosi Sarid expressed his amazement over the fact that President 'Ezer Weizman did not consult Meretz before he starting to campaign for the establishment of a national unity government. He means well, but his deeds are very unwelcome, Minister Sarid said. In any event, this is a futile idea that does not have a chance of turning into reality, Sarid said.

["Likud Chairman Binyamin Netanyahu said the Likud has not accepted the call to establish a national unity government, and will not rescue a government which takes the path of destruction."]

Labor Think Tank To View Palestinian State Option

TA0712125693 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 7 Dec 93 p A7

[Report by party affairs correspondent Yerah Tal]

[Excerpts] The think tank established by the Labor party in order to formulate ideas and recommendations for the permanent arrangement with the Palestinians will thoroughly examine the option of a Palestinian state. It will also examine the options of a Palestinian-Israeli confederation or a tripartite confederation between Jordan, the Palestinians, and Israel.

The committee held its first meeting several days ago to set its modus operandi and is scheduled to reconvene at the end of the month.

The composition of the team was determined in consultations between Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin and Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres. The 10-member think tank strikes a certain balance between the party's doves and the more hawkish mainstream flank.

The members are Deputy Foreign Minister Yosi Beilin; Deputy Defense Minister Mordekhay Gur; Knesset Member [MK] Efrayim Sne; MK Gedalya Gal; Major General (reserves) Shlomo Gazit; former Foreign Ministry Director General David Kimche; Elqana Harnof, former deputy head of the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] Intelligence Branch, who has also served as Prime Minister Rabin's military secretary; Professor Shlomo Ben-'Ami, a former Israeli ambassador to Spain; Attorney Hayim Tzadoq, a former justice minister; and Mordekhay Nesyahu, the head of the Research and Development unit at Bet Berl [Labor party ideological institution].

The first working paper, which will serve as the basis for the think tank's efforts, was prepared by Nesyahu, the team's coordinator. The document stipulates that if the PLO successfully meets the various tests of the interim arrangement, then the establishment of some form of Palestinian state will become inevitable.

Labor Secretary Nisim Zvili said yesterday that the committee's job will be to recommend various possible alternatives for a permanent arrangement with the Palestinians, which will then be discussed at the Labor party convention several months before the next elections. [passage omitted]

The committee will also be asked to submit its opinion on the desired attributes of future agreements with Syria and Jordan and on their link to the permanent arrangement with the Palestinians. The "Nesyahu document" stresses that "a synthesis between Syria's demand for the restoration of its sovereignty over all of the Golan Heights and Israel's demand for full peace along the lines of the Egyptian model will serve as the basis for a peace agreement between Syria and Israel."

The document adds that following the implementation of the arrangements on the Golan Heights and in the territories, some of the Jewish settlements will find themselves under Arab sovereignty, and their residents will have to decide whether to continue living under a Syrian or Palestinian flag or move back into Israel with the aid of whatever government support is allocated.

Nesyahu believes that in such a situation, most of the Jewish residents of the Golan Heights will prefer to evacuate their homes.

Bulgaria's Zhelev Visits Sites, Addresses Knesset

AU0712091493 Sofia BTA in English 1628 GMT 6 Dec 93

[Report by Evgenia Manolova]

[Text] Jerusalem, December 6 (BTA)—President Zhelev started the second day of his official visit to Israel planting trees in the forest of peace on one of the hills in Jerusalem. Anyone who has rescued at least six Jewish lives can plant a tree there. President Zhelev did so on behalf of Bulgaria which rescued 50,000 Jews from Nazi death camps. Later on Dr. Zhelev and the Bulgarian delegation visited Yad Vashem, a memorial to the 6 million victims of the holocaust. "The silent condemnation by innocent holocaust victims, by those in heaven who give us light in darkness, is moving and fearsome. There is one thing even gods cannot do: alter history. I am proud of my nation, which, grieving for Macedonian and Aegean Jews who died 50 years ago, can proudly say it acted on the dictates of humanity during inhuman

times, rescuing the lives of 50,000 of its Jewish compatriots. I am convinced that the Yad Vashem Memorial could gain a lot by marking this instance of courage and solidarity," President Zhelev wrote in the memorial's visitors' book.

Later President Zhelev visited the old town. In the residence of Patriarch Diodoros I of Jerusalem, the president presented to the former an icon of St. Ivan Rilski, a gift from Patriarch Maksim of Bulgaria. Patriarch Diodoros I delivered to President Zhelev the Grand Cross of the Holy Sepulcher and to Mrs. Zhelev a relic with a piece of the holy cross. The Bulgarian president went sightseeing in Jerusalem's old quarters, visiting the holy sepulcher and holy places of Judaism and Islam.

Dr. Zhelev today addressed the Israeli Parliament, the Knesset. He was the first Bulgarian state leader to do so. His speech this afternoon, addressed to President Ezer Weizman, the Knesset speaker Shevah Weiss and Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin, focused on the historical roots of the centuries-old relations between Bulgarians and Jews and recalled the compassion manifested by the Bulgarian public during World War II.

"Tolerance is a condition for democracy and anti-Semitism is its negation," Dr. Zhelev said. "Such is Bulgaria's message today, at all European forums it participates in, especially in the Council of Europe, which has the obligation to counter manifestations of xenophobia and anti-Semitism on the European continent today."

Dwelling on the complex processes of peaceful settlement in the Middle East, the president said, "the Israeli leadership had the courage to take steps towards peace and good-neighbourly relations, attending the Madrid conference and subsequent multilateral and bilateral negotiations, signing and ratifying the agreement with Palestinian representatives on September 13 and tirelessly sponsoring acceptables forms of negotiations and reconciliation with its Arab neighbours." Dr. Zhelev expressed certainty that the parties to the this process will reach understanding and untie even the tightest knots to achieve lasting and stable peace in the Middle East. The president focused on Bulgaria's efforts to help build the Middle East peace by contributing builders, engineers and experts in different fields.

Commenting on bilateral relations, Dr. Zhelev stressed the importance of the accord on reciprocal investment protection and promotion signed today. The president also recalled Israel will take part in the Black Sea Economic Cooperation Conference opening in Sofia this week, assisted by Bulgaria.

Later today, the foreign ministers of Bulgaria Stanislav Daskalov and Israel Shim'on Peres signed an accord on mutual investment protection and promotion and an agreement on visa-free entry for holders of diplomatic and business passports staying up to three months.

The ministers discussed details of draft accords in tourism and agriculture. Territorial development and construction minister Khristo Totev today began business negotiations with Israeli partners. The talks above all concern prospects for Bulgarian construction companies to work in Israel.

Foreign Minister Stanislav Daskalov today delivered before the International Relations Council a lecture on the priorities of Bulgarian foreign policy, especially emphasizing Bulgaria's role in the Balkans and its stand of neutrality and non-intervention in the Yugoconflict.

President Zhelev visited Bethlehem and in the evening gave a reception for Israeli President Ezer Weizman.

Diplomatic Ties Reestablished With Laos

TA0712055493 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 0500 GMT 7 Dec 93

[Text] Israel and Laos have renewed diplomatic relations. The agreement was signed by the two countries' UN ambassadors in New York last night. It was also agreed that the foreign minister of Laos will visit Israel in the spring. An Israeli delegation is expected to visit Laos in the near future to examine the possibility of cooperation between the two countries.

Incorporation in Research Project Approved

TA0612113193 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 6 Dec 93 p A1

[Report by Judy Maltz]

[Excerpts] Israel is the first and only non-European country to be incorporated in Eureka, a vast industrial and technological research and development project.

Last week the project management decided to open a special bureau in Israel, to enable Israeli firms to obtain information about new European research and development plans and to propose plans of their own. An announcement to this effect was received yesterday at the Foreign Ministry in Jerusalem. [passage omitted]

In the wake of this development, Chief Scientist Shuqi Gleitman of the Industry and Trade Ministry is to be allocated a special budget that will be used to encourage Israeli firms to participate in various projects and to initiate programs of their own. [passage omitted]

Foreign Minister Queried on Christopher Visit

NC0812082993 Cairo Voice of the Arabs in Arabic 0610 GMT 8 Dec 93

[Telephone interview with Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Talal al-Hasan, in Amman, by Ashraf 'Abd-al-'Aziz, in Cairo, carried on the "Dialogue From Afar" program; date not given—recorded]

[Text] ['Abd-al-'Aziz] Your Excellency, I welcome you to the Voice of the Arabs.

[Al-Hasan] Thank you.

['Abd-al-'Aziz] Your Excellency, U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher visited Jordan as part of his Middle East tour and met with Jordanian officials. Can you tell us about the proposals that Jordan submitted to the U.S. secretary?

[Al-Hasan] I must first explain that Secretary Christopher's visit to Jordan demonstrates yet again the genuine wish of the U.S. Administration, particularly President Clinton, to continue their commitment to the peace process as a full partner in the operation. The U.S. Administration is interested and has pledged to play the role of an effective, impartial mediator in this process.

Naturally, the discussions were frank, constructive, and friendly. In the words of His Majesty the King, Jordan emphasized its commitment to the peace and its intention to continue the process in hopes of reaching a comprehensive, just, and lasting regional settlement. Jordan also asserted its well-known constants of calling for implementing UN Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338, its adherence to international legitimacy, the exchange of land for peace, and restoration of the Palestinian people's legitimate rights.

As I said, these meetings were conducted in an open, friendly atmosphere. Jordanian-U.S. issues and the close friendly relations between His Majesty the King and President Clinton were also discussed.

['Abd-al-'Aziz] Your Excellency, everyone was waiting eagerly for Christopher's tour, especially since it was announced beforehand that he would be bringing new U.S. proposals, both to the Arabs and the Israelis. What new proposals did Christopher present to His Majesty King Husayn and the Jordanian officials?

[Al-Hasan] I must first express my hope that Secretary Christopher's trip will have the desired success. During the visit, we reviewed the entire course of the peace process and Jordan's effective role. Jordan affirmed its interest and commitment to the peace process until the necessary progress is made on the Jordanian-Israeli track, the Syrian and Lebanese tracks, and in the Palestinian-Israeli discussions. Jordan believes there must be a comprehensive solution, not separate solutions, in order to attain a comprehensive, just, and lasting regional settlement. The solution must be satisfactory to all concerned parties and acceptable to future generations.

['Abd-al-'Aziz] Before we conclude this dialogue, I wish to raise two points—one pertaining to the Jericho area and the other to Aqabah. Speaking of Jericho, if Israeli forces remain stationed between you and the Jericho area, what will Jordan's position be, particularly as the Palestinians refuse to allow an Israeli presence between the two sides?

[Al-Hasan] In Jordan we have had a clear position on the agreement signed by the Palestinian brothers and Israel in Washington on 13 September. Jordan subsequently signed an agenda agreement with Israel. Jordan slowed down the implementation of this agreement because it wanted to wait until real progress was made on the Palestinian-Israeli track. Our position on the agreement was clear: We declared our backing and respect for independent Palestinian decisions, for the historic responsibility that the PLO has shouldered, and for the PLO's wishes. We also view this agreement as a step toward progress on all negotiating tracks with the aim of attaining a comprehensive, just, and lasting regional peace.

['Abd-al-'Aziz] Let us move to the other point, namely reports about turning al-'Aqabah, or rather the Gulf of Aqabah, into a free zone so that al-'Aqabah port can be joined with Elat. How much truth is there in these reports?

[Al-Hasan] Venerable brother, as I have already made clear in this dialogue, Jordan signed an agenda agreement on 14 September and later ratified it. We are committed to the framework of this agenda and seek to implement it in the context of the Jordanian-Israeli track. Jordan is committed not only to the bilateral talks but also to the multilateral talks. It believes that the multilateral talks complement but are not a substitute for bilateral talks. In this respect, Jordan aims to revive the process of regional cooperation in a context of a comprehensive, just, and lasting peace. Jordan necessarily attaches great importance and will give priority to future regional projects. Still, we need to see practical measures being taken to pave the way for a comprehensive and just peace in the Middle East.

['Abd-al-'Aziz] Does this mean that the Gulf of Aqabah will be a free zone as specified by the 14 September agreement?

[Al-Hasan] Aqabah is an important area. This area, along with others, must be fully discussed in the context of the bilateral or multilateral talks. We are dealing with the peace issue in a comprehensive way, in the bilateral, multilateral, and regional contexts. When we see real, tangible steps in the bilateral talks, there will necessarily be real steps in the multilateral talks also.

['Abd-al-'Aziz] Your Excellency Mr. Talal al-Hasan, thank you very much. You are always welcome to the Voice of the Arabs.

[Al-Hasan] You are welcome. Please convey my greetings to your brother colleagues.

U.S. Role in Advancement of Peace Process Seen

JN0812095493 Amman SAWT AL-SHA'B in Arabic 8 Dec 93 pp 1, 24

[Editorial: "The Peace Process Toward A Breakthrough"]

[Text] It seems that the peace process, which has been deadlocked during the past few weeks, is showing signs of a breakthrough during Christopher's tour of the region, thus activating it in a more serious manner.

As he so announced, U.S. Secretary of State Christopher is carrying a message of hope to the region. He also said he will continue his efforts to break the stalemate in the negotiations on the four tracks.

It is clear that the negotiations on the Palestinian-Israeli track after Christopher's meetings with President 'Arafat and Yitzhaq Rabin are beginning to witness an encouraging breakthrough and noteworthy progress as admitted by both parties.

Moreover, noting that the date to resume negotiations on the Syrian-Israeli track is approaching is a sign of this initial breakthrough. This is especially so since U.S. Secretary Christopher announced that the negotiations on the four tracks will resume in Washington early next month. Hence, this confirms the success of the U.S. secretary's current tour of the region.

If we take into consideration the imminent meeting between President 'Arafat and Shim'on Peres and the subsequent imminent meeting between 'Arafat and Yitzhaq Rabin, it becomes clear that the negotiations on the Palestinian-Israeli track are on their way toward achieving encouraging progress. The more comforting aspect of the U.S. secretary's tour is that he is carrying reassurance from President Clinton that the U.S. Administration is committed to achieving a comprehensive peace on the four tracks. This confirms that Jordan's adherence to a comprehensive solution has received the required U.S. response.

It is well known that Jordan, under the leadership of His Majesty King Husayn, has always reaffirmed its rejection of attempts to divide the peace process which will lead to striking separate settlement deals with Israel. Jordan's participation in the Madrid conference from the beginning, was based on this. Jordan knows very well that dividing the peace process will weaken the Arab negotiating position.

Jordan has, therefore, made exhaustive, continuous efforts to bring real coordination among the Arab cordon states up to the desired level. We hope that the U.S. role will continue to advance and activate the peace process and remove the obstacles Israel is trying to plant in its way. Otherwise, this opportunity to achieve peace may be the last.

Christopher Tour, Israeli Intransigence Viewed

JN0812082293 Amman AL-RAY in Arabic 8 Dec 93 p 1

[Editorial: "Christopher's Tour and Rabin's Intransigence"]

[Text] Statements made by U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher during his current shuttle tour of the region, which include some promises and hints about a breakthrough, and his announcement to reporters about a new message of hope that will please the region indicate that the continuous U.S. efforts to achieve progress in the peace process are still facing constant Israeli intransigence. This Israeli intransigence is represented by Israeli Prime Minister Rabin's statements that Israel's security is the basis of the peace process and that any thoughts of withdrawal from the occupied Arab territories will only take place based on the requirements of Israeli security, and that it is not yet time to hand Gaza and Jericho over to the Palestinians despite the signing of the Oslo agreement.

The U.S. secretary's statements to reporters are nothing but an attempt to depict his visit as a success despite his total conviction that the tour did not achieve its desired goal and that Israel is not willing to announce any goodwill gesture toward any negotiating track.

The message of hope which the U.S. secretary talked about is confined to a statement which he may announce tomorrow, fixing the date to begin Syrian-Israeli talks in the near future without wrenching any promise from Rabin about a change in the declared Israeli stand on the Syrian Golan, implementing the Palestinian-Israeli agreement on Gaza and Jericho, or thinking of softening that stand.

Therefore, the U.S. secretary will leave the region without achieving any notable progress or surprises. This is especially since Rabin announced from the beginning that Israel does not want U.S. mediation among the negotiating parties. This confirms Israel's persistence on not offering anything new during the U.S. secretary's tour.

The message of hope which Christopher is expected to announce will only be a headline to cover up the negative aspects of the Israeli stand and an attempt to throw dust in people's eyes.

Economic Agreement Delayed at 'Arafat's Request

JN0812103293 Amman SAWT AL-SHA'B in Arabic 8 Dec 93 p 1

[By Riyad Mansur]

[Text] His Majesty King Husayn and Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat have agreed to postpone the signing of an economic agreement between the two sides. The signing was expected to take place during 'Arafat's visit to Amman.

A Palestinian source told SAWT AL-SHA'B that President 'Arafat asked for the postponement until the draft agreement is presented to the PLO Executive Committee for endorsement.

The Palestinian source expects the PLO Executive Committee to introduce some amendments to the agreement that was drafted and proposed by the Jordanian side to avoid any contradiction with the Palestinian-Israeli agreement signed recently in Washington.

Dr. Jawad al-'Anani, minister of information and minister of state for cabinet affairs, said, in a statement he made two days before 'Arafat's arrival in Amman, that the draft agreement, which will organize the future relationship between Jordan and the Palestinian self-rule area, has become ready for signing.

The draft Jordanian-Palestinian economic agreement calls for forming a joint banking, monetary committee to be charged with coordinating monetary and banking policies in the occupied territory and opening new banks or new branches of existing Jordanian banks.

The draft agreement stipulates that the Jordanian dinar will remain in circulation during the interim period or until the Palestinians issue their own currency.

Paper Views Husayn-al-Asad Meeting

JN0712200493 Amman AL-'ASR AL-IAMD in Arabic 7 Dec 93 pp 1, 11

[Unattributed report]

[Text] Jordan will not be the second country to sign a full-blown declaration of principles with the Zionist enemy, King Husayn Bin-Talal told Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad when they met in Damascus recently.

President al-Asad replied: I do not need your majesty's assurances, dear brother, since we greatly admire and appreciate Jordan's position and your own. You are known for strictly keeping your promises.

King Husayn was very pleased because President Hafiz al-Asad trusts Jordan's solid position. King Husayn said: Brother President: There are some Arab and international sides that say that Jordan will sign a separate agreement with the enemy, as the PLO did. These sides have gone too far by claiming that it is only a question of time before Jordan signs this agreement.

I would like to note once again Jordan's pan-Arab position and that Jordan will not sign a separate agreement. If there were to be anything of this sort, it would happen simultaneously with you here in Damascus and with the Lebanese brothers in Beirut.

The king goes on: I hope that the Syrian-Israeli talks will make headway and break the deadlock. The purpose of my visit is not to reassure your excellency that Jordan's position has not changed. I want us to explore together prospects for this and the coming stages, that is, after signing peace treaties with "Israel."

President al-Asad got the message, so the two moved on to another issue and spoke in frank terms. We cannot now reveal the subject of their conversation. We can assert, however, that King Husayn's visit to Damascus has planted the seeds of a new political axis. This axis will take shape in the future in three capitals—Amman, Damascus, and Beirut.

Jericho—we will not say Jerusalem—was absent from this axis. The reason for this is the tension in Jordanian-Palestinian and Syrian-Palestinian relations. The Syrian position makes perfect sense because of the criticism leveled by some Syrian officials against the Gaza-Jericho accord and the presence of the anti-'Arafat Palestinian factions in Damascus. These factions enjoy a considerably free movement in Damascus. Tension on the Jordanian- Palestinian axis, however, has other reasons. President 'Arafat has practically decided to suspend the activity of Jordanian-Palestinian committees in favor of activities by Palestinian-Israeli committees likely to be formed. Information leaking from Tunis says President 'Arafat exchanged letters with enemy Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin and Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres. The letters indicate an "Israeli" desire for bilateral coordination, temporarily excluding Jordan.

Although in the early letters he exchanged with Rabin and Peres, 'Arafat refused to alienate Jordan, he was later subjected to pressures that said the proper way to build a prosperous Palestinian entity not burdened with huge debts goes through Palestinian-Israeli federal ties on the economic level and in infrastructure. This can be accompanied by a political confederation, in which Jordan can be incorporated in the future.

From the viewpoint of Rabin and Peres, this requires a Palestinian attempt to evade the meetings of the Jordanian-Palestinian joint working committees, or to dilute or freeze these committees if President 'Arafat has the courage to take such a step. Continued effective work by these committees will be at the expense of the potential Palestinian-Israeli committees. This will, effectively, mean that the peace process between the two parties [not identified] will be slowed down at Israel's decision.

The same information noted that President 'Arafat agreed in principle to discuss Rabin's and Peres' ideas on integration between the two countries (Palestine and Israel) and would try his best to appease the Jordanians, who feel bitter and disappointed not only because they were ignored, but because of what they feel is directed against them, especially over the issue of the PLO's desire after it settles in Gaza and Jericho to extend its political and moral authority over the Jordanians of Palestinian origin—those who live in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan as full citizens.

The same issue was raised by Palestinian and Israeli officials, who are still holding secret meetings in and outside Palestine. The discussion then broadened to

cover Palestinians in Syria and Lebanon and who will have political authority over them. Consequently, the Israelis suggested that the Palestinian entity be turned into another "Israel", whereby the Palestinian authority can extend its canopy over the Palestinians outside its territory, even if they were citizens of another country, similar to what Israel is doing with Jews in other countries in the world.

This proposal split the Palestinian negotiators into two groups. The first supported these ideas and stressed the need for a "national identity" for the Palestinians that would allow the Palestinian government in the future to influence the political decisions in countries with big "Palestinian communities. These communities can act as a "lobby" that can pressure the governments in these countries to serve the directions of the Palestinian government in the future.

The second group rejected these ideas in part and parcel. Instead, this group presented the idea of letting the Jordanians of Palestinian origin, who have been living in Jordan since 1967, have the right to choose between Jordanian or Palestinian nationality, or dual nationality if the Jordanian Government accepts this idea. At the same time, the Jordanians of Palestinian origin who were living in Jordan before 1967 are considered Jordanians who do not have that right to choose. The same is applicable to the Palestinians living in Syria, Lebanon, and Iraq.

This and other information was conveyed to his majesty the king and the Jordanian Government by Nabil Sha'th, who presented full details on the Jordanian dimension in the Palestinian-Israeli talks that were resented by the Jordanian leadership and government. His majesty the king summoned Palestinian ambassador to Jordan al-Tayyib 'Abd-al-Rahim and handed him a message of resentment and blame for everything that happened without Jordan's knowledge, although Jordan has been the focus of the talks and negotiations.

When al-Tayyib 'Abd-al-Rahim did not find a friendly ear for what he said in Tunis, he threatened to resign if things were not corrected with Jordan personally by President 'Arafat who should go to Amman to correct the relations that faltered as a result of some Palestinian officials' ignorance of the geographical, historical, social, and political facts between the two banks of Jordan River. At last, he succeeded in convincing President 'Arafat of the dangerous stage through which the Jordanian-PLO relations are passing. He was assisted in this task by Nabil Sha'th, Abu-Mazin [PLO Executive Committee member Mahmud 'Abbas], and Abu-al-'Ala' [PLO Executive Committee member Ahmad Quray'] who disclosed that economic deals are about to be concluded between the PLO and several European and U.S. companies. These companies were urged by the government of the Zionist enemy to contact the PLO and to present tempting economic offers to it under Zionist political terms. In return for this, the enemy government will facilitate the activities of these companies in the West Bank and Gaza Strip and in the Zionist entity itself.

This official Palestinian trend clearly annoyed the Jordanian politicians who did not expect the PLO to embark on such sensitive steps without coordination with its Jordanian brothers.

Meanwhile, Palestinian officials considered the success of Tahir al-Masri becoming speaker of the Jordanian House of Representatives, and increasing the number of ministers of Palestinian origin in the Jordanian Government, following the recent reshuffle made by Dr. 'Abd-al-Salam al-Majali, a message to the Palestinian leadership that emphasizes the fact that there is no difference at all between the Jordanian citizens regardless of their origins, as his majesty the king stresses in every speech.

We say yes to this, and we will not be the guards of regionalism or Sykes-Picot Treaty.

Estonian President, Delegation Pays Visit

King, Meri Hold Talks 4 Dec

JN0412135293 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1200 GMT 4 Dec 93

[Text] His Majesty King Husayn and Estonian President Lennart Meri today held a closed meeting at Raghdan Palace. This was followed by an expanded meeting attended by Jordanian and Estonian officials.

Various regional and international issues were discussed during the talks. The talks also focused on prospects for future cooperation between the two countries, especially in the economic and scientific fields, scientific research, and means to establish and strengthen bilateral ties in all fields.

The guest president praised His Majesty King Husayn's stands and wise and courageous policies on the various events and developments seen in the region. He also praised Jordan's position and efforts in the peace process that seeks to achieve the just, comprehensive, and lasting peace in the region and the world. He also noted with appreciation Jordan's participation in UN peace keeping efforts in various parts of the world.

The meeting was attended by Prime Minister Dr. 'Abd-al-Salam al-Majali; Marwan al-Qasim, his majesty's political adviser; Prince Talal Bin-Muhammad, his majesty's military secretary; Ziyad Fariz, planning minister; Talal al-Hasan, minister of state for foreign affairs; Dr. Rima Khalaf, minister of trade and industry; and Staff General 'Abd-al-Hafiz Mar'i al-Ka'abinah, chairman of the joint chiefs of staff.

From the Estonian side, the meeting was attended by Economics Minister Toomas Sildmae; Foreign Minister (Ikay Vas); Major General Aleksander Einseln, commander of the Estonian Defense Forces; and a number of senior Estonian officials.

Meri on Talks With King

JN0412205193 Amman Jordan Television Network in English 2000 GMT 4 Dec 93

[Interview with Estonian President Lennart Meri by Jordan Television correspondent Kassab Samawi, in Amman on 4 December; from the "News at Ten" program—recorded]

[Text] [Meri] We had a very good talk with his majesty the king, and I think that this day will go into history as a day where Estonia and Jordan are closely together for peace, democracy, and for cooperation in cultural, technological fields. We spoke a lot about the possibilities which have been opened only now, after Estonia was able to restore her independence.

[Samawi] What are the main areas of cooperation between Estonia and Jordan?

[Meri] Well, to be quite precise, we just had a very good discussion here at the Royal Institute for Science and Technology. And you know, Estonia has been one of the leading states with her technology in the oil shale. Jordan is very rich in oil shale. I think that with the technology we have developed in Estonia, we can be much of use also for the future Jordanian oil shale industry.

[Samawi] Mr. President, what is your point of view concerning the Middle East peace process?

[Meri] Well, there is a real hope this time. I remember the Resolution 242, which was adopted when I was rather a young boy still. And I am very happy that now, after so many years of waiting and of fighting for peace, for a better future, that there is a real foundation for developing a future where stability and a higher standard of living will be open to everybody who is devoted to the cause of peace, freedom, and democracy.

Meri Ends Visit, Departs 5 Dec

JN0512170193 Amman Radio Jordan in English 1100 GMT 5 Dec 92

[Text] His majesty the king and Her Majesty Queen Nur bade farewell to Estonian president and Mrs. Leonart Meri as they left Jordan at the end of a three-day state visit.

His majesty and the President Meri held talks yesterday on regional and international issues and prospects of Jordanian-Estonian cooperation in various fields.

The Estonian president was accorded a full-honor ceremony, which also included top civic and military officials.

Measures Needed To Address Deputies 'Anxieties'

JN0712134093 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 7 Dec 93 p 4

[Editorial: "Rounds for Democracy"]

[Text] Round one and two in the Lower House's vote of confidence debate yesterday and the day before have produced an array of opinions dominated by concerns about the peace process, domestic reforms and Prime Minister 'Abd al-Salam al-Majali's performance since he assumed office several months ago. Yet the isue of the democratisation process in the country, which has been affected not so so much by the exclusion of members of the Lower House from the Cabinet but rather by the absence of an effective consultation process between the two branches of government, remains to be the focal point for the people and their representatives.

As a result of this, the democratic spirit that the country has been trying to cultivate and strengthen was somewhat dampened since it also came on the heels of a series of other steps that have not been seen as democratic. The dissolution of the 11th parliament rather prematurely has been largely accepted as a necessary evil due to the imperfection of the 1989 general elections. However, when coupled with other controversial measures and decisions such as the one-person-one-vote criterion or the imperfect way the November 8 parliamentary elections were conducted, a climate of scepticism about the fate of democracy was created even though this might have never been intended.

These events have naturally led some members of the lower chamber to heavily criticise the government for what they saw as an "orchestrated campaign" by it to further its political fortunes and objectives. While all accusations by the honourable members are not necessarily fair or accuate, we nevertheless feel that the prime minister could have done more to avoid bypassing of parliamentarians, in the context of seeking their advice and consent that usually characterise democratic regimes worldwide or forming or reshuffling governments.

Given the extent of the controversies that past policy decisions by the al-Majali government have created in the country, one would have thought that the prime minister would make a more determined effort to soothe the feelings of many parliamentarians and woo then on the side of his newly formed cabinet by involving them in the real consultation process leading to major national decisions. There are other ways to establish positive and constructive bridges with the legislature than to assign Cabinet portfolios to some of them. This has not been done and in the process left the government, exposed to attack at a time when the country is passing through a critical stage in its political life.

We do not think it is too late to rectify the situation even though there is no imminent danger that Dr. al-Majali may lose the vote of confidence. The way the law on this point reads makes it extremely far fetched to assemble 41 Lower House members to cast a negative vote against the government. But this is not the main concern. Even though the government will eventually win its battle, the victory could prove to be shallow unless urgent measures are introduced to address the legitimate anxieties of the people's representatives. The national issues that lie

ahead call for the strongest possible government and one that enjoys the widest possible grassroots support. This objective can still be attained if a more constructive dialogue and effective line of communication is maintained between the two branches of government.

We do not think that the parliamentarians who criticised the government were all seekinig Cabinet posts. Our reading of their complaints suggests that something much more profound was on the minds of many of them. We like to think it is their strong desire to see democracy in full swing in Jordan that prompted them to adopt such position.

Muslim Brotherhood Leader on Peace, Elections

JN0712115493 Amman AKHIR KHABAR in Arabic 5-6 Dec 93 p 5

[Interview with Muhammad 'Abd-al-Rahman Khalifah, controller general of the Muslim Brotherhood in Jordan, by Bassam Baddarin; place and date not given]

[Text] [Baddarin] Many interpret your balanced stand on events in the country as being a weakness to confront the authorities. What do you have to say to such an interpretation?

[Khalifah] The way we tackle political events or others, whether with the authorities or any other party, stems from our firm principles and our religion, which has been a source of pride to us in the past, and will continue to be so in the future.

We raise our children in accordance with this religion and its noble and tolerant traditions. We are dutybound to praise those who do good and take to account those who do not, without slandering individuals or institutions. From all this, we seek to please God and obey Him. We oppose where opposition is needed and constructive. There is no absolute opposition which lasts forever, and there is also no absolute support which also lasts forever. We support what is right, guided by God's teachings.

[Baddarin] Some analysts say that the Islamic Action Front's [IAF] breaking away from the Muslim Brotherhood has squandered the latter's efforts vis-a-vis the Jordanian Muslim constituency and has greatly reduced the number of votes you should have obtained, a number which has increased over the past four years?

[Khalifah] I do not know what you mean when you say the IAF's breaking away because the IAF is a Jordanian Islamic party which comprises Muslim Brotherhood members and who form the majority of its members. Its principles do not conflict with those of the Muslim Brotherhood. There has not been an organizational unity between them for one to say that the IAF has broken away from the Muslim Brotherhood. On the contrary, we have the same principles, concepts, and general policies. We did not differ during the elections. What happened during the recent elections concerns the party and is in accordance with the decisions made by the command.

I can say that the IAF has been a successful and important vanguard experience that opened new vistas for the party members who aspire to have Islam regulate all walks of life in terms of administration, politics, economy, and faith. I do not believe the IAF has squandered our efforts and presence within our constituency. The number of votes we obtained in the recent elections increased from the 12 per cent we obtained in the 1989 elections to 18 percent in the recent elections in spite of the decrease in the number of seats in parliament for reasons no one ignores.

[Baddarin] Is it true that you have failed the IAF in the recent elections, or have you supported it?

[Khalifah] It is natural that as a group, we supported all the IAF candidates in the recent elections. It suffices to say that the Muslim Brotherhood candidates were nominated in the name of the IAF and we transferred our support to all these candidates without distinguishing one from the other.

[Baddarin] You are the head of the Islamic body in Jordan and yet you do not explicitly state your stand on the important developments in the country. Why?

[Khalifah] We have explicitly and sincerely voiced and continue to voice our viewpoint on all the major events our region experiences. Our stand on the Palestinian issue is clear and is known by every Arab and Muslim citizen. The firm stand the Muslim Brotherhood adopts is in line with Islam, which bans the relinquishment of any inch of Islamic land. What if the land that World Zionism is invading with the backing of the United States, the United Kingdom and their allies is Palestine, the land from where Prophet Muhammad ascended to Heaven, and which houses Jerusalem? We oppose any solution that gives World Zionism any part of Palestine. What the Jews have taken by force cannot but be regained by force. The loss of any part of Palestine, however minimal, is rejected because it harms our religion and faith. The same applies to the Jordanian-Zionist agenda. We announced our rejection of everything that they call peace solutions and oppose all forms of normalization with the Zionist enemy. We view all these as leading to the establishment of Greater Israel as the efforts by World Zionist are in line with the designs of the imperialist countries led by the United States and united Europe. The Arabs should unite under the banner of Islam and its rule if they want to survive. It is a matter of life and death.

[Baddarin] The Islamist candidates won fewer seats in the recent elections than they did in the 1989 elections. What do you have to say about this? And how would you, in your capacity as controller general of the Muslim Brotherhood, evaluate the recent parliamentary elections?

[Khalifah] There is no doubt that internal mistakes made during the election process were behind the decrease in

the number of seats won by the Muslim Brotherhood, which is noticeably lower than the number of seats won by the Brotherhood in the 1989 elections. The worst mistake was the failure to make sound judgment in certain instances, in addition to the new situation within the Islamic movement in the aftermath of the launching of the IAF. Due to the introduction of the one-person, one-vote law, which resulted in seeing five or six candidates running in the same electoral district, the international circumstances, the internal and external pressures surrounding the Islamic awakening in general and Islamic groups in particular, the undemocratic and erroneous practices, the arbitrary measures taken by the authorities before and during the election process, the media misrepresentation of Islamic figures and candidates, the end result has shown that the Islamic movement has a special and effective presence within the IAF. Sixteen out of 32, the total number of candidates named by the IAF, won the elections. Thus, the Brotherhood achieved a success rate of 50 percent. The Brotherhood deputies obtained 18 percent of the overall votes; the votes obtained by these 16 deputies constitute 31 percent of the overall votes obtained by the remaining 64 deputies. It is true were hoping for better results.

[Baddarin] It has been said that your cadres compted with the IAF cadres in the elections. This manifested itself in the support you lent to some candidates. How true is this?

[Khalifah] I do not deny that some mistakes were made, and that some erroneous practices were seen in some constituencies. This adversely affected the election outcome in these constituencies. These mistakes are related to the choice of some candidates and the election process per se. We are about to study these mistakes and evaluate the results so that future generations may learn lessons, God willing.

[Baddarin] Did you support any of the Brotherhood candidates in the elections?

[Khalifah] It is only natural that the Islamic movement should support in every way it can all the candidates who belong to the Brotherhood and the IAF.

[Baddarin] Some of those fishing in murky waters have attempted to draw comparisons between the overall situation in Jordan and what is taking place in Egypt and Algeria. Are you satisfied with such comparisons?

[Khalifah] The deterioration being experienced by Egypt, the country which was once the cradle of Islam, resources, pride, and dignity, as well as Algeria, which is known as the country that offered 1.5 million martyrs, is the tragedy of the age. Moreover, Muslims all over the Muslim world are experiencing unsatisfactory situations. These tragedies are heartrending. This is because the tragic events taking place there conflict with the injunctions of the true Islamic religion, the religion of their fathers and forefathers [illegible words] when they uphld it and sought inspiration from its injunctions. But, when they deviated from the true path, acted against God's teachings, and did His creatures injustice, God has made them experience starvation and fear. All this is the result of the erroneous practices of the Egyptian and Algerian regimes, which have muzzled freedoms, canceled election results, and prevented the majority of the people from forming Islamic parties that comply with Koranic teachings and traditions of Prophet Muhammad, without forgetting the need to adapt to new modern methods. Official terrorism is being practiced against Islamists. What is taking place in these two countries is a reaction to these reckless practices. We as a group are opposed to violence as a way to resolve political differences. We condemn such reckless acts, which can do no good, but rather harm the pillars of security, economy, virtue, and humanity. Such acts cause rancor. I believe there is no room for a comparison between the current overall situation in Jordan, and what is taking place in these two dear countries. May God rid them of the affliction they are experiencing. May God rid all afflicted Muslim peoples of the tragedies plaguing them.

Hizballah Refuses To Meet U.S. Congressmen

NC0712145993 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1345 GMT 7 Dec 93

[Excerpt] Beirut, 7 Dec (MENA)—Muhammad Barjawi, a Hizballah official and a member of the "Loyalty to the Resistance Bloc" in the Lebanese Parliament, has stated that Hizballah is not prepared to meet U.S. Congress members to discuss the Israeli soldiers missing in Lebanon since 1982. In an exclusive statement to a MENA correspondent in Beirut, Barjawi denied there were arrangements with any side to hold such a meeting.

Barjawi said Hizballah believes that any contacts on this subject should be held through international humanitarian organizations, such as the International Committee of the Red Cross [ICRC] or Amnesty International.

Barjawi stressed that Hizballah only has the bodies of two Israeli soldiers captured in a resistance operation in 1986. He strongly denied that Hizballah is holding six or seven missing Israeli soldiers.

Asked whether Hizballah has set out any conditions for handing over the bodies of the two Israeli soldiers, Barjawi said: We have informed the ICRC in the past that we demand the release of Lebanese and Arab detainees in Israeli prisons and the liberation of all Arab territories. [passage omitted]

Hizballah Statement Reported

NC0712175493 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1725 GMT 7 Dec 93

[Text] Hizballah has reacted to reports on a possible meeting with a U.S. congressional delegation to discuss the fate of missing Israeli soldiers in Lebanon. It said it is not prepared for any direct or indirect meeting with any official U.S. body or figure to discuss the missing Israeli soldiers.

A Hizballah statement says the detailed information about the soldiers is now clear. The statement calls for checking the fate of hundreds of people in Israeli prisons.

After talks with Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad in Damascus on Sunday, U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher said Syria pledged to help a U.S. congressional team in its efforts to learn the fate of the missing Israeli soldiers.

Al-Hirawi Sends UN Note on Peace, Human Rights

NC0812074193 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 0530 GMT 8 Dec 93

[Text] Yesterday, President al-Hirawi expressed his hopes that the just and comprehensive peace march will succeed and that Lebanon will regain sovereignty over its territory and become an oasis of prosperity once again.

In a message to UN Secretary General Butrus-Ghali, President al-Hirawi said Lebanon has knocked on every possible door, seeking the implementation of the international resolutions, foremost of which is Resolution 425. The first step in respecting human rights lies in respecting the international resolutions and the institutions tasked with implementing these resolutions and protecting human rights. We can only salute the UN's good efforts in every direction in pursuit of these objectives, which the whole world agrees should be adopted and implemented.

The message, which was sent on the occasion of the World Day of Human Rights, says: The current age—an age calling for equality for women and combating illiteracy, an age with serious dangers such as starvation, pollution, chemical weapons, and others—is an age that requires international cooperation to avoid evil and entrench the values of peace and comprehensiveness on this globe. Lebanon's sufferings from the malicious conflicts imposed upon it continue to be an example of violations of human rights. These conflicts have afflicted Lebanon for 16 years of its history and cost us a great deal in tragedies, destruction, and in economic, social, educational, health, and environmental regression, all of which left their marks in condemnation of their perpetrators and the international abandonment of Lebanon—a country that never stopped trying to keep up with the times. However, although these regressions burdened us heavily, the Lebanese are firmly determined to overcome these difficulties so that Lebanon will regain its vanguard position and again be a distinguished symbol.

In his message to Butrus-Ghali, President al-Hirawi adds: The most appropriate positive indication of Lebanese abilities is the success of the coexistence experiment, which has become stronger and brighter, a success Lebanon is very proud of since it portrays the country as an example of human togetherness.

Our people in the south and western al-Biqa' are suffering from indiscriminate acts that expose them daily to murder, detention, and harm, as well as the disruption of their agricultural work, and where they are gripped by terror and humiliated by the occupation. The continuation of this situation is irrefutable evidence of the violations of human rights on Lebanese territory and against our nationalism, existence, independence, and sovereignty.

Al-Shar' Briefs Buwayz on Talks With Christopher

NC0712133593 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1215 GMT 7 Dec 93

[Text] Our political correspondent says it is possible that Christopher will visit Lebanon, but the date of the visit will not be announced because of security reasons and at the request of the U.S. side.

Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz yesterday received a phone call from his Syrian counterpart, Faruq al-Shar'. Al-Shar' briefed Buwayz on the outcome of the U.S. secretary of state's talks with him and other Syrian officials.

Government Reportedly Prepares 'Purge'

PM0912101793 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 4 Dec 93 pp 1, 4

[Unattributed report: "Differences in Lebanon Impede Dismissal of Senior State Officials"]

[Excerpt] Beirut, AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT—Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri's government has succeeded where others failed. It has carried out an administrative purge aimed at reforming and modernizing the Lebanese adminisration and making it more effective.

AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT has obtained a list of the names of the directors general who will be included in the purge campaign. Political differences between government leaders prevented determination of their fate at yesterday's cabinet meeting. They are:

1. Jabal Lubnan Governor Judge Amin Hammud.
2. Al-Biqa' Governor Farid al-Qarm.
3. Oil Ministry Director General Niqula Nasr.
4. Former Lebanese Electricity Authority Director General Jean Leon.
5. Southern Council Chairman Dr. Hasan Yusuf.
6. Vocational and Technical Training Director General Dr. 'Ali Zaraqit.
7. Grain and Beets Bureau Director General Muhammad Raji al-Bisat.
8. 'Imad al-Nawwam, a ministry director general.
9. Samah Makarim, former acting director general of the Public Works Ministry.

It has transpired that each one of these is a supporter of a certain political group which sought to confirm them in their positions. It has been claimed that some of them are supporters of some high-ranking state figures. It has been decided to defer this matter until a later date but sources close to Prime Minister al-Hariri say that the matter will be raised again before the end of this month in a manner that will serve the government's efforts to reform and develop the Lebanese administration and make it more effective. [passage omitted]

Recent Fighting, Military Activities Reported

NC0712142093 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1130 GMT 7 Dec 93

[Text] With regard to the security situation in the south, Israeli attacks on southern towns and villages are continuing. This shelling is coupled with the reinforcement of locations in the central sector. The Resistance responded with three attacks on joint Israeli-Lahdist positions.

In a series of attacks this morning, Israeli artillery fired shells from their positions inside the occupied area Mazra'at al-Hamra', which is on the outskirts of Yuhmur and Arnun. The Israeli forces strengthened their positions in the eastern sector. This morning, they brought three armored vehicles to the Zummarayya post, close to the deportees' camp. They also brought a Merkava tank to Tallat al-Dughni, north of the town of Hasbayya.

At dawn today, artillery positioned in Abu Qamhah valley and Tallat [name indistinct], near the town of Shab'a, shelled the hills of Jabbur, Jabal Abu Rashid, and the woods at (Jabal al- Qutramah). In addition, they floodlit the contact line that extends from Taw'amat Niha, in the west, to the heights around al-Dahr, in the east.

At 1130 this morning, artillery and large-and medium-caliber machine guns raked the areas around the Israeli positions in 'Ali al-Tahir. From their positions in Qal'at al-Shaqif, they shelled the areas west of the castle.

Since noon today, the outskirts of Habbush, Kafr Rumman, and 'Arab Salim have come under artillery shelling from the Israeli-occupied positions in al-Zaffatah. Wadi al-Akhdar has also come under shelling from the occupation's positions on the hills opposite it. Four shells fell on the Israeli occupation's positions in al-Suwayda'. The Resistance responded by attacking the Taw'amat Niha post overlooking the western al-Biqa' with artillery and machine guns. Another Resistance group also attacked a joint occupation and agent position in Kafr Hunah. The agents' radio, which admitted the attack took place, did not mention any casualties among the men at the post.

The Amal operations' room in the south today issued a statement announcing that one of its groups from the Martyrs Hasan Ni'mah and Kamal Qurrah 'Ali unit attacked an occupation post in Jabal Tuhrah using machine guns and artillery last night. A half-hour clash ensued with the men at the post. The resistance men succeeded in hitting the post and destroying its observation tower. The statement added, that soon afterward, Israeli artillery shelled the town of Kafr Rumman until dawn. It directed its large-caliber artillery toward the Kafr Rumman-Habbush-al-Nabatiyah triangle. The shelling and sniping reached as far as the outskirts of al-Nabatiyah and Kafr Tibnit. In its statement, Amal pledged to its martyrs that it will continue its course of resistance until the south is liberated from Israeli occupation.

Paper Cited on Peace Talks, Christopher Visit

JN0812080393 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 8 Dec 93 pp 1,10

[Excerpt] Tel Aviv (Agencies)—Israel said Tuesday [7 December] Syria was ready to resume bilateral peace talks, and U.S. and Israeli officials suggested these could get under way in January after a four-month gap.

Israeli Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres, emerging from a meeting with visiting U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher, said Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad had "expressed his readiness to resume the talks.

But an official Syrian newspaper, the English-language Syria Times, repeated on Tuesday Syria's position that the talks could not resume until Israel gave a firm commitment to quit the Golan Heights.

The paper also said Syria had rejected an Israeli offer of a "four-phase withdrawal" from the Golan in return for peace.

The Syria Times said the plan was turned down during Mr. Christopher's visit Sunday when he met President al-Asad.

"Mr. Christopher heard in Damascus an open and frank rejection of the Israeli four-phase withdrawal in return for immediate peace with Syria plan," the English-language daily said.

A commentary in the newspaper gave no details of the plan, but Damascus insists on a full withdrawal from the Golan.

State Department spokesman Michael McCurry called the report preposterous. He said the U.S. team had no knowledge of any such four-phase plan by Israel.

Mr. Christopher is to make a return visit to Damascus on Thursday as part of his Middle East tour.

"Syria could accept scheduling the coming round of the Washington talks only if Mr. Christopher brings with him concrete and explicit guarantees of an Israeli withdrawal," said the Syria Times.

"Otherwise, all his efforts will mean nothing," it warned.

Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin, who met Mr. Christopher Sunday, said the Secretary of State was likely to announce a timetable later in the week for the Syrian-Israeli talks stalled since September.

Asked if they would resume next month, a U.S. officials on Mr. Christopher's Middle East tour said: "I wouldn't guide you away from it, but the secretary obviously has another discussion with al-Asad and it'll be possible to say more publicly after that."

Syria suspended the talks with Israel in Washington last September, saying Israel refused to commit itself to a full withdrawal from Golan.

A senior Israeli official told reporters the aim was to resume talks between Israel and neighbouring Arab states in Washington early next year, an announcement is expected when Mr. Christopher returns to Damascus Thursday. [passage omitted]

Press Says No Change in Israeli Position

JN0812085293 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0545 GMT 8 Dec 93

[From the press review]

[Text] The newspaper TISHRIN says: At the conclusion of his visit to Damascus, Mr. Christopher stated that Syria is serious about peace, and that it really seeks to achieve a just and comprehensive settlement.

TISHRIN says that Christopher's statements fly in the face of the parties which are casting doubts on Syria's positions and holding it responsible for obstructing regional peace efforts. As a matter of fact, the paper notes, it was Damascus which opened the doors for peace when it endorsed the U.S. peace initiative after proper amendments had been incorporated into it. Besides, Syria made the achievement of peace possible when it submitted a full-blown working paper to Israeli negotiators, reflecting a realistic conception of peace. This convinced the entire world community of Syria's position. This also showed that only comprehensive peace is viable and practicable.

TISHRIN adds: Syria has honored all its commitments to the peace process. Consequently, it will not obstruct the international efforts to end regional tension. It has become clear that the Washington talks' impasse was caused by Israel, which has failed to accept the components and requirements of true peace and mobilized its resources to circumvent the components of a comprehensive settlement and scuttle the current peace opportunity.

TISHRIN goes on to say: The world hoped that the Washington talks would produce a comprehensive settlement conducive to peace and prosperity. However, the end result has been a separate and inequitable deal with the PLO. This deal has failed to resolve any problem. Thus, it has produced disappointment.

Concluding, TISHRIN says: Washington has announced its commitment to advance the peace process. This requires the U.S. Administration to exert further efforts to address the Israeli position and prompt it to accept the components of just peace. For Syria can accept nothing short of an honorable and equitable peace, one that would ensure complete Israeli withdrawal from the occupied territories and bring an end to Israel's policy of aggression and threats.

For its part, the newspaper AL-THAWRAH notes the difficulty of the U.S. secretary of state's mission in the face of the Israeli position. Meanwhile, the paper notes, Syria has renewed its commitment to just and comprehensive peace and affirmed its desire to continue to

cooperate with the United States to ensure that the negotiations on the Syrian and Lebanese tracks achieve their objectives.

AL-THAWRAH adds: Since his arrival in the region, Christopher has thus far held two rounds of talks with Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin and senior Israeli Government officials. Tel Aviv is attempting to give the impression that the outcome of the talks is positive. However, there has been no news of any change in Israel's obstructionist policy and positions.

AL-THAWRAH believes that Israel is hiding behind the Oslo agreement, advancing the pretext of according this agreement top priority. Meanwhile, the Rabin government, as a matter of fact, is using this agreement to repress the Palestinian people, contain them, and liquidate their cause. It is deliberately engaged in procrastination and prevarication to render the agreement void of any meaningful content, consecrate the occupation, and buy time in the hope of scuttling and destroying the entire peace process.

The paper affirms that the international community and the U.S. cosponsor have realized that the deal concluded in dark lobbies is suffocating under the immense pressure of the big explosion currently witnessed in the occupied Arab territories. Likewise, they have seen Syria's credibility, as well as the soundness of its positions and peace perspective. Moreover, they have reached the conclusion that separate deals cannot bring peace, and that it is impossible to circumvent the hard facts of the conflict, as well as Syria's role.

Concluding its commentary, AL-THAWRAH says: The success of the U.S. efforts to advance the peace process is contingent upon the United States' ability to play the role of an impartial partner, and to use firmness in dealing with the obstructionist Israeli side to make it withdraw completely from the occupied Arab territories in implementation of the relevant UN [General Assembly] and UN Security Council resolutions.

AL-BA'TH newspaper believes that constant tension in the Middle East will continue to jeopardize world security and peace, for this region is extremely important to most world states and peoples. Hence, the entire world community has begun to stress the need for a comprehensive and just peace in the Middle East.

AL-BA'TH notes the intensive political moves currently under way to revitalize the peace process, which is obstructed by the Israeli opposition to just and comprehensive peace. The paper adds that Israel is using familiar methods to achieve partial and separate solutions. Israel believes that such solutions would help it achieve its chief policy objective, namely, having both land and peace.

The paper goes on to say: That is why Israel accepted the Gaza-Jericho accord. This accord would help achieve all Israeli objectives. In the aftermath of the signing of the Gaza-Jericho accord, the most important Israeli objective has been to halt the intifadah. However, instead of seeing it halted, the Palestinians have stepped up their intifadah, particularly since they have realized the dangers posed to their present and future.

AL-BA'TH says: It is impossible for Israel to have both land and peace. Israel will be mistaken if it believes that some breaches here and there could create the propitious circumstances that would promote its plans and objectives in the Arab homeland. The policy of procrastination and maneuvering is useless. Such a policy would not help promote the cause of peace. In contrast, full commitment to the principles and terms of reference of the peace process by Israel could help resume the stalled peace talks, which have merely marked time due to Israeli intransigence.

Concluding its commentary, AL-BA'TH repeats the remarks His Excellency President Hafiz al-Asad made to U.S. Secretary of State Christopher three days ago, namely, that Syria is concerned about the continuation of the peace process, and that it wants to cooperate with the United States to achieve just and comprehensive peace in the region.

Bangladesh

IDB To Provide $10 Million Loan to Bangladesh

BK0712130093 Dhaka Radio Bangladesh Network in Bengali 1230 GMT 7 Dec 93

[Text] Islamic Development Bank [IDB] will give a loan of $10 million to Bangladesh. An agreement to this effect was signed in Dhaka today between the Government of Bangladesh and the IDB. This assistance will be utilized for the construction of 500 government primary schools and 120 madrashas [religious schools] in the country. The agreement was signed by the Bangladesh finance minister, Saifur Rahman, and the president of the IDB, Dr. Mohammad Ali.

The IDB chief arrived in Dhaka today on a three-day visit to Bangladesh.

India

Prime Minister Postpones G-15 Summit

BK0712155193 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 7 Dec 93

[Text] The prime minister, Mr. Narasimha Rao, has decided to postpone the G-15 summit scheduled to begin on the 13th of this month in New Delhi. An official spokesman said that the decision followed a suggestion to this effect by the previous chairman of G-15, the president of Senegal, and the next president of the summit, the president of Argentina. The spokesman added that besides a number of other heads of state and government are unable to attend the New Delhi Summit because of unexpected domestic developments in their countries. This information was conveyed to India only over the last 24 hours.

The meeting of the personal representatives of G-15 heads of state and government will, however, commence tomorrow. The foreign ministers will also meet later this week. It is, however, expected that some of the heads of state and government may come for consultations with the prime minister during the scheduled dates of the postponed summit.

Minister Leaves for Pakistan With Bhutto Invitation

BK0712161493 Delhi ISI Diplomatic Information Service in English 1545 GMT 7 Dec 93

["Press Release" of the External Affairs Ministry; dated 7 December]

[Text] R.L. Bhatia, minister of state for external affairs, left by a special aircraft for Islamabad today, as special envoy of the prime minister. Later this evening, he is expected to meet Pakistan Prime Minister Ms. Benazir Bhutto and deliver to her an invitation from our prime minister to attend the "education for all" summit, which is to be shortly held in New Delhi.

The Government of India had advance intimation that owing to certain preoccupations, the prime minister of Pakistan would not be able to attend this summit but as a special gesture and to contribute to the atmosphere of normalization, the prime minister had decided to nevertheless send a special envoy to Islamabad to personally deliver his invitation to her.

The prime minister, it will be recalled, had earlier sent a special envoy to Bangladesh, although Bangladesh Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia had stated that she could not come for the summit owing to domestic preoccupations, Mrs. Selja, deputy minister in the Ministry of Human Resources Development, had been sent to Bangladesh to deliver prime minister's invitation personally [sentence as received]. This is in accordance with prime minister's wish that special courtesies should be extended to the heads of government of our neighboring countries.

Space Commission Chair on U.S. Sanctions, Market

BK0712121793 Delhi THE HINDUSTAN TIMES in English 1 Dec 93 p 7

[By staff correspondent]

[Text] Calcutta, Nov. 30—Despite the American sanctions on the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO), the country will go ahead with the programme to build the cryogenic rocket engine by 1998, Space Commission Chairman U.R. Rao said here today.

He, however, kept his fingers crossed about the coming visit of the Russians next week for "renegotiation" on rocket technology transfer.

"I'm not bothered about embargoes from other countries. I don't care as long as my own country does not put an embargo on me", he remarked. Describing the American objection to the rocket technology transfer from Russia as "unfortunate", he told a Press conference that Indian space programme was "an open book" which strictly adhered to the international missile technology regime.

PSLV [Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle] FAILURE: Prof. Rao said that the high-power committee inquiring into the failure of the PSLV launch in September had completed its work and would submit its report to the Government by Dec. 15. The exact reason for the failure has been identified and it would help perfect the subsequent satellite launching operations.

He later said during his J.C. Bose Memorial Lecture at the Bose Institute that although the PSLV could not place the satellite into the right orbit, the fact that all the PSLV motors, control components, inertial and navigational systems and associated ground segment facilities,

including the highly sophisticated PCMC [expansion unknown] radars, had functioned properly demonstrated the maturity of ISRO in rocket technology.

The difficult yaw manoeuvre in the atmospheric phase and the faultless performance up to the ignition of third stage motor proved beyond doubt that "India will enter the league of major developed nations as a space power within a short period". The development of GSLV [Geostationary Launch Vehicle] by 1996, capable of launching 2.5 tonne INSAT-2 class of satellites into a geostationary orbit, according to him, will enable India to effectively compete in the space market.

Commenting on the PSLV launch failure, Prof. Rao mentioned that last year there had been as many as 11 such failures by different countries. All the failed launches were by established rockets. He, however added that unless the ISRO was able to ensure 98 per cent reliability, it would not undertake any more launches.

Prof. Rao claimed that the ISRO was seen more and more as a competitive player in the international market for space technology. In recent months several agreements were signed with foreign companies for the sale of technology. Describing high technology as the "currency of power" in today's world, he complained that the recent American insistence on pricing did not do justice to countries like India. "This is not the level playing field the Americans talk about", he remarked.

According to him, the ISRO's order book from Indian industries, which was Rs. [rupees] 100 million in the 1970s and Rs. 1 billion during 1980-85, had risen to Rs. 7 billion during 1985-90. He was also hopeful that the establishment of the autonomous antrix corporation by the Government would prove a major step in facilitating international marketing of the country's space expertise.

Minister Comments on GATT Agreement

BK0712132093 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1230 GMT 7 Dec 93

[Text] The commerce minister says India will have to take a balanced view on the new GATT agreement now being finalized. Mr. Pranab Mukherji told the Rajya Sabha that every country is busy preserving its own interests and as such New Delhi has to work within the global trade system and secure the maximum possible advantages. Replying to a two-day debate on the Dunkel draft, he asserted that India cannot afford to adopt an ostrich-like attitude. He disclosed that there will be more than a year's time for ratifying the new GATT treaty after negotiations based on the Dunkel proposals are completed on the 15th of this month. Therefore, there is a time to take a broad view of the developments.

The opposition staged a walkout insisting that the government should not ratify the treaty without consulting parliament.

Aims Behind U.S. Foreign Assistance Act Viewed

BK0812113293 Delhi All India Radio General Overseas Service in English 1010 GMT 8 Dec 93

[Commentary by columnist Manohar Lal Chug]

[Text] The new [United States] foreign assistance bill, which in the name of eliminating Pressler Amendment, gives authority to President Bill Clinton to impose sanctions against country that rejects U.S. nonproliferation demands. The 136-page bill includes apart from nonproliferation, promotion of democratic values as interpreted by the United States, contribution to America's economic strength which is the foundation of American foreign policy and leadership abroad, sustainable development and American security and security at home. The aid will now be available to developing and least developed countries subject to strengthening of democracy which advances U.S. interests. It will also cover population growth of the country at a level that is consistent with sustainable and broadly based development. In other words, after the bill becomes the act, foreign assistance to a country will depend upon its obeying America on nonproliferation, democratic values and that, too, if it contributes to America's economic strength and keeping population growth by the aid-receiving countries at a level decided by the United states.

The Clinton administration has also clarified that under the bill President Clinton can set aside the provisions of the Pressler Amendment on Pakistan if deemed necessary by the United States in national interest. The draft does include provisions for U.S. national interest waiver of sanctions. However, as a policy, the United States will keep Pressler's standard as essential basis for exercising any national interest waiver and for resuming economic and military assistance which includes decision to sell or transfer military equipment or technology to Pakistan. The present Pressler law does not contain any provision for waivers. The policy experts in Washington are rather skeptical of the extent to which the Clinton administration would succeed in repealing the Pressler Amendment that sparked the U.S. aid cut-off to Pakistan three years ago. The South Dakota Republican senator, Larry Pressler, wanted the U.S. President to certify that Islamabad is free of nuclear weapons and is not pursuing a program in this direction before resuming military or economic aid. There is bound to be opposition from the Congress against administration's initiative in amending the act. The Congress would not tolerate the loss of their power to the administration on as significant an issue as nuclear nonproliferation. According to William Clarke, a senior adviser on Asian affairs at the Center of Strategic and International Studies, the differences between the Congress and the administration over the continuation of Pressler Amendment symbolized the power struggle between the two. Senator Larry Pressler and John Glenn have also vowed to fight the White House move to finale. The main reason why the Clinton administration now seeks to bring about changes in the Pressler laws is a fact

that it contains no provision for waivers. But enactment of the bill will become counterproductive. (?Len) Davis, U.S. under secretary of state for international security affairs, has rightly questioned that if President Bill Clinton has no plans to resume aid to Pakistan as he puts it, then why does he need to make the Pressler Amendment more broad-based? Several other nonproliferation legislations already exist and President Bill Clinton can well propose newer, more comprehensive ones. However, if the idea is the resumption of aid to Pakistan, it would only mean further encouragement to proliferation.

The draft also seeks to protect U.S. aid to Israel and Egypt, meaning, thereby, that Israel's nuclear program is going to be unaffected. Extension of Pressler law to North Korea and South Africa will be meaningless. If India is the target as is evident, the U.S. wants the global regime of nonproliferation that can apply only to the non-nuclear nations. None of the five nuclear powers would give up their nuclear cause. Senator Pressler has already drawn the attention of Washington administration to China's developing of new intercontinental ballistic missiles with multiple warheads with a range of 6,000 to 8,000 miles. Chinese are attempting to produce their own versions of the Russian SS-24 and SS-25 mobile intercontinental ballistic missiles. Is America apprehensive of China's growing strength, trying once again to cultivate Pakistan to have foothold to encircle China in the near future to save U.S. security interests. In the changed scenario, the United States wants to resume its military and economic relationship with Pakistan which was suspended in October 1990 when the Pakistan-specific Pressler Amendment was slapped on it.

BJP Leaders Remanded to 'Judicial Custody'

BK0812015293 Delhi Doordarshan Television Network in English 1615 GMT 7 Dec 93

[Text] The BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] president, Mr. L.K. Advani; the party's former president, Dr. Murli Manohar Joshi; and the former Uttar Pradesh chief minister, Mr. Kalyan Singh; were today remanded to judicial custody in Lucknow. The state chief secretary, Mr. T.S.R. Subramaniam, told our Lucknow bureau that the three BJP leaders and several others were remanded to judicial custody in connection with the December 6 Ayodhya incident of last year. The orders were issued by the special court inquiring into the Ayodhya incident after the leaders refused to get personal bonds for bail. Though the prosecution did not ask for bail or personal bonds, however, the court asked Mr. Kalyan Singh for it, which he refused. Following this, Mr. Advani and Dr. Joshi also refused to furnish personal bonds. The court then ordered that the leaders be held in judicial custody till the 20th of this month.

Parliament Adjourns After 'Agitation'

BK0812095693 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0830 GMT 8 Dec 93

[Text] Both houses of parliament have been adjourned till this afternoon following an agitation by the BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] members over the detention of their senior party leaders. The Lok Sabha could not take up any scheduled business while in the Rajya Sabha the question hour was conducted for about 45 minutes amidst noisy scenes.

The trouble broke out in the Lok Sabha soon after it met this morning as the BJP members tried to stall the proceedings. Mr. Jaswant Singh, BJP, alleged that the arrest of Mr. L.K. Advani and other leaders was politically motivated. He demanded immediate withdrawal of what he called false cases against them. The Speaker, Mr. Shivraj Patil, asked the BJP members to raise the issue during the ensuing zero hour and allow the question hour to proceed as scheduled. But the BJP members trooped into the well of the house shouting slogans which made the Speaker to adjourn the house till 12 noon. But the noisy scenes were witnessed when the house met again. The deputy speaker, Mr. Mallikarjunaiah, who was in the chair adjourned the house till 0200 PM.

In the Rajya Sabha, the BJP leader, Mr. Sikander Bakht, demanded the suspension of the question hour to discuss what he called illegal detention of his party leaders in Uttar Pradesh. Even when he was pleading for the withdrawal of the case, his party colleagues rushed into the well of the House and shouted slogans. The deputy chairperson, Dr. Najma Heptulla, requested the BJP members to return to their seats as they would be allowed to raise the issue after the question hour. She even offered to put their demand for suspension of the question hour to vote. Her repeated requests to the BJP members to allow the proceedings to go on had no effect. Amidst slogan shouting from the well of the house, the deputy chairperson continued with the listed questions but nothing could be heard in the din. After about 45 minutes, she adjourned the house for a while during which she said she would consult with Mr. Sikander Bakht how best to sort out the matter. As Rajya Sabha reassembled after about 15 minutes the BJP members again moved into the well of the house and continued with slogan shouting. The deputy chairperson, Dr. Najma Heptulla, told the BJP members that she would allow them to air their complaints and will see that the government responds. She also said that even the home minister will be asked to make a statement. The minister of state for parliamentary affairs, Dr. Abrar Ahmad, said the government is ready to make a statement to lay bare the facts. He accused the BJP members of shying away from facing the case because of what he called their actions last year. Observing that the BJP members were undermining the dignity of the house, he said if they want to say something they must say that being in their seats. As the BJP members continued slogans, the chair ordered the tabling of the papers and adjourned the house till 0230 PM.

Army Recovers Explosives in Kashmir

BK0712162093 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 7 Dec 93

[Text] In the Kashmir Valley, the Army on specific information recovered two and a half tons of explosive

materials along with detonating acessories from Tarzu village near Sopor. According to an official spokesman, with the explosives more than 1,000 bombs could have been made.

In Srinagar, the situation by-and-large remained peaceful today despite a call by some groups for defiance of the prohibitory orders on the Hazratbal shrine issue. About 500 people assembled in the Hazratbal shrine complex to organize quran khwani [prayer meeting] and later dispersed peacefully. Police had to use tear gas to disperse a mob in Rajaori Kadal area when some miscreants indulged in heavy stone throwing.

Coalition Ministry Takes Oath in Mizoram

BK0812093493 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0830 GMT 8 Dec 93

[Excerpt] In Mizoram, a 15-member two-tier coalition ministry headed by Mr. Lal Thanhawla has been sworn in. The oath of office and secrecy was administered to the chief minister and eight other cabinet ministers and six ministers of state by the governor, Mr. (P.R. Scindia), at a function at Raj Bhavan [Governor House] in Aizawl this morning. [passage ommitted]

Iran

President Welcomes Pakistan's Bhutto, Comments

LD0812115293 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1030 GMT 8 Dec 93

[Text] Ms. Benazir Bhutto, prime minister of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, arrived in Tehran today before noon at the head of a high-ranking delegation for a three-day visit to our country. She was welcomed at the airport by President Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani.

On arrival Ms. Bhutto said that she is happy to visit our country once again. She then said that Iran is her second home and that, in view of the time-honored cultural, historical, and religious ties, she feels that the two countries have a model relationship.

She added that during her stay in Iran she will exchange views with President Hashemi-Rafsanjani and his colleagues, and that she will have the honor of being received by His Eminence Ayatollah Khamene'i, the eminent leader of the Islamic revolution.

Ms. Bhutto said that bilateral ties and any measure necessary to strengthen those ties will feature in her talks. She was certain there is a great need to bolster cooperation between the two countries and expand contacts between their officials. Such a development would enable the two countries to maximize benefits from the deployment of their potentials for commercial and economic exchanges.

She then said she hopes to arrive at agreement with her hosts on specific projects for cooperation. She said her team has considered a number of projects in the oil and gas sector which will be submitted to her hosts.

Ms. Bhutto emphasized that both Iran and Pakistan are extremely concerned over the open violation of the UN Charter in Kashmir, Bosnia, and Azerbaijan, where aggression and violence have replaced the UN Charter. The Pakistani prime minister also said she will exchange views with her Iranian brothers on the best way to help our Afghan brothers put an end to their fratricide. She will also exchange views on ways and means of cooperation with the Central Asian countries within the framework of the Economic Cooperation Organization [ECO].

For his part President Hashemi-Rafsanjani spoke about the level of Iranian relations with Pakistan and the Ms. Bhutto's visit to Tehran. He said:

[Begin Hashemi-Rafsanjani recording] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. The visit of Pakistan's lady prime minister will provide the right opportunity for us to have serious discussions on cooperation between the two countries as well as on problems of the region and the need to give the ECO greater dynamism. The topics of Afghanistan, Kashmir, Central Asia, the problems of Bosnia and Palestine, and the international conditions prevailing following the disintegration of the Soviet bloc will all be within the realm of our discourse.

Pakistan is an important country in the region because of her large population and conditions similar to those in Iran and ample common interests between our two countries. Some unfinished talks remain to be completed which we had both with the lady prime minister and the outgoing Pakistani government. These will be followed up in this visit. Mutual respect between Iran and Pakistan will facilitate conditions for cooperation. [end recording]

This is the first official visit of Ms. Bhutto in her second term as Pakistani prime minister. Three years ago she paid an official visit to our country. More than 80 officials including ministers of foreign affairs, defense and economic affairs and finance together with the pakistani prime minister's spouse are accompanying Ms. Bhutto in this visit.

Commentary Previews Bhutto's Visit

NC0812090793 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0445 GMT 8 Dec 93

[Commentary prepared by the News Commentaries Group]

[Text] Pakistani Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto is to arrive in Tehran today at the head of a high-ranking delegation for meetings and talks with our country's officials. On the eve of her visit to Tehran, Benazir Bhutto told a correspondent in an interview that this visit is a good opportunity for an exchange of views

among the two countries' officials on expanding relations and bilateral cooperation. She said that in addition to bilateral relations, regional and international issues are also to be discussed.

In view of their common historic, cultural, and religious backgrounds, there are extremely favorable grounds for the expansion of cooperation and relations between Iran and Pakistan. All these elements have bolstered the two countries' relations; so much so that a change in governments cannot have any affect on them.

As far as the significance that Pakistan attaches to relations with the Islamic Republic of Iran is concerned, we can refer to Benazir Bhutto's remarks at a meeting in Islamabad with one of our country's officials in November. During this meeting, Benazir Bhutto described Iranian-Pakistani relations as profoundly rooted and said that the expansion of relations with the Islamic Republic of Iran is one of the priorities in Pakistan's foreign policy.

Under current conditions, Pakistan is going through a post-crisis era and is coping with domestic economic problems and pressures by foreign powers. Under these conditions, the Islamic Republic of Iran is considered an important buttress for strengthening Pakistan's economy and mitigating pressures by foreign powers.

From the economic aspect, during the past [Iranian] year [ending 20 March 1993], $300 million of goods were exchanged equally between Iran and Pakistan. The sale of 20,000 barrels of oil per day formed 80 percent of Iranian exports, while rice comprised 65 percent of Pakistan's exports to Iran. The volume of trade between the two countries is expected to reach $500 million.

Iran and Pakistan are developing Third World countries and can take effective steps by exchanging long-term agreements in the field of agriculture and natural resources. Moreover, for better use of the two countries' resources, their existing protocols should also be further accelerated.

Officials Refute UN Charges on Human Rights

LD0712141693 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1030 GMT 7 Dec 93

[Excerpts] It was said earlier in the news that a UN commission last night issued a resolution condemning what the West calls human rights violations in Iran. This resolution was compiled on the basis of a report prepared by Mr. [Reynaldo] Galindo Pohl, the UN Human Rights Commission [UNHRC] special envoy. In his report, Galindo Pohl admitted that the main sources for his information were opponents [of the regime] abroad. Galindo Pohl's report is almost a carbon copy of earlier reports he compiled during the past couple of years.

This morning our correspondent went to interview the Foreign Ministry's international affairs deputy [Mohammad Javad Zarif] on Mr. Galindo Pohl's record of writing such reports. In reply, Mr. Zarif said:

[Begin recording] [Zarif] During his first visit to Iran in 1989, Mr. Galindo Pohl prepared a report which rejected many baseless allegations against Iran. Following that report, many Western parliamentarians wrote to the UN secretary general to demand that Mr. Galindo Pohl be replaced because he had failed to write sufficient articles against Iran. This demonstrates that the objective of this political game had in fact been decided before Mr. Galindo Pohl's trip. He would have faced political pressure had he acted outside a framework. During his first visit, Western officials thought he had worked outside the framework. This is an important point behind Galindo Pohl's reports.

[Correspondent] Why did the Islamic Republic of Iran oppose a visit by the UNHRC's special envoy?

[Zarif] Our reason—and our difficulty with the existing course of the UNHRC's investigations—is the selective and political approach of the international forums, thanks to the pressure imposed by Western countries to prepare artificially negative reports. For this very reason we permitted Mr. Galindo Pohl to visit Iran three times. We demonstrated that the Islamic Republic is not concerned or afraid to present the facts inside the country. We are still prepared to participate actively in international efforts of the UNHRC, provided they are kept outside the framework of political considerations. Otherwise, we would not offer our cooperation.

As for our reason for not permitting Mr. Galindo Pohl to visit Iran, it is because the outcome of his visit was decided in advance in accordance with the said political framework. [end recording]

[Announcer] [passage omitted] In its resolution last night, the UNHRC expressed concern about court proceedings in Iran. The country's judicial authorities, by relying on evidence, have already stressed that such allegations are baseless.

Our correspondent interviewed State Supreme Court President [Morteza] Moqtada'i on the issues raised in the resolution. Mr. Moqtada'i said:

[Begin Moqtada'i recording] We have repeatedly stressed that the honorable officials in our Islamic Republic, particularly legal authorities and the esteemed judges, are committed to respect the highest standards of human rights. They observe human rights because they are committed to Islam and feel duty bound, as a religious obligation, to observe Islamic principles and human rights in accordance with the divine obligations imparted to them.

In the report released by the special UNHRC official we found some cases which are based on totally unfounded reports. Such reports could not be substantiated in any court or any legal administration.

As to the appointment of judges, we have very sound and specific legal regulations. Our courts are public and open to everyone. Everyone can attend court proceedings, but no one is personally invited to attend. Attendance is free and anyone who wishes to can attend our courts.

The UNHRC resolution also alleges Iran's involvement in the assassination of some members of small [opposition] groups, but these, as these groups themselves admit, are due to their own growing internal disputes. In recent months especially, the West has tried very hard by every possible means to link Iran to these assassinations. In spite of all these efforts, however, even the reports published by Western politico-news circles admit that there is no reliable evidence to prove this link; all they have is allegations by these small groups. The court recently set up in Germany became a platform for exonerating Iran from these kinds of accusations, contrary to the expectations of Western espionage services. [end recording]

[Announcer] The UNHRC special report also alleges that the rights of religious minorities are violated in Iran.

Replying to this, the world leader of the Assyrians said: The rights of minorities in Iran are observed in such a way as is seen in only a few Western countries. The Armenians and other religious minorities have also themselves spoken on this issue and have emphasized that the rights of minorities in Iran, contrary to the fabrications of Mr. Galindo Pohl, are being observed well. The leaders of religious minorities in Iran have suggested that in any future reports the special envoy also take into consideration the facts.

In any case, charges that human rights are being violated in countries which are on the whole opposed to U.S. policies seem likely to be repeated in future years.

'Purge' of Airline Authority Ordered After Hijack

PM0712175393 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 4 Dec 93 p 2

[Unattributed report: "Nine Arrested and Major Purge Under Way in Iranian Civil Aviation Authority"]

[Text] Tehran, London, AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT—The Iranian Government has ordered an intensive purge of the Civil Aviation Authority, including the dismissal of hundreds of that authority's officials.

No less than nine people, including two of the authority's officials, have been arrested on unspecified charges, according to reports from Khuzestan in the south.

Iranian sources said yesterday that the Iranian Government's orders were issued after one of the authority's employees hijacked a civilian aircraft chartered by the National Iranian Oil Company and took it to Iraq last week.

The Iranian authorities fear the hijacking may be the first in a series of similar operations, as Iranian opposition groups abroad have threatened to escalate their operations. Iran is at present experiencing an economic crisis. Meanwhile, the Iranian Civil Aviation Authority has reintroduced regulations providing for the presence of at least two armed guards aboard every civilian aircraft. These regulations were introduced in 1981 and later dropped. Supervision of some sensitive airports is returned to the Revolutionary Guard, which assumed that duty until two years ago.

The fate of the hijacked aircraft, a Fokker Friendship, has not yet been determined, although all its passengers and crew, with the exception of the hijacker and his family, have been sent back to Iran.

Iran fears that Baghdad might keep the aircraft in retaliation for Iran's refusal to give back 160 Iraqi military and civilian aircraft which took refuge in Iran during the war for the liberation of Kuwait. Any such Iraqi move would torpedo the current efforts being made by both sides to improve relations and form a "resistance bloc" against what they see as U.S. attempts to isolate them.

Khamene'i Comments on Role of Women, Rushdie

LD0812120893 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1030 GMT 8 Dec 93

[Excerpts] On the occasion of Women's Week, this morning a large number of Muslim and revolutionary women of Iran gathered in Imam Khomeyni's Husayniyah [prayer house] and met with His Eminence Ayatollah Khamene'i, the leader of Islamic revolution. In this audience, which took place amid the warm and sincere expression of sentiments by the audience who shouted slogans reaffirming their obedience to the eminent leader, His Eminence Ayatollah Khamene'i made some remarks and conveyed his deep-felt respect for the lofty status of the true followers of Her Holiness Fatima Zahra [Prophet's Muhammad's daughter], may peace be upon her. He then set out to describe what Islam considers to be the special characteristics of women in an Islamic society. [passage omitted]

The eminent leader of Islamic revolution described the special characteristics of women in an Islamic society and said: In an Islamic society, women should possess political awareness, and at the same time should know how to manage the affairs of their homes and treat their husbands. Furthermore, on the scene of activities in social, political, and scientific spheres they should be a model of purity and modesty. They should bear in mind that hijab [Islamic attire for women] enjoys utmost priority. Without hijab women cannot earn the necessary opportunity to move toward a lofty status.

The eminent leader then considered the Western world's criticism of the Islamic Republic of Iran's insistence on observance of hijab as an indication of their ignorance and the presence of severe contradictions in the Western culture. He said: Observance of hijab is considered in Western culture as a violation of human rights. However, shooting down a civilian plane [reference to Iranian

airbus shot down by U.S. warship in July 1988] and killing its passengers is not considered a violation of human rights. Worse still, the perpetrator of such an atrocity is subsequently rewarded. The Western culture does not criticize the events in Bosnia-Herzegovina where the Serbs and the Croats destroy everything and commit all kinds of atrocities. However, when a criminal or a smuggler who has brought addiction to deadly drugs to thousands of people, is prosecuted and sentenced to death in Iran, the Western world and the so-called civilized elements raise the cry of protest and claim that what we do constitutes a violation of human rights.

Citing more examples from the existing contradictions in the Western culture, the eminent leader referred to the publication of the insulting blasphemous book *The Satanic Verses*, which aimed to insult Islam and the great Prophet; a book which was written by an evil person who enjoyed the blessing of the Western world. This incited the hatred of world Muslims, and his eminence the imam [Khomeyni], may he be admitted to God's paradise, issued the divine decree condemning to death an apostate writer who had offended the sentiments of 1 billion Muslims. However, the Western culture considers this decree as a violation of human rights.

The leader of the Islamic revolution considered the meeting between U.S. President Clinton and the apostate Rushdie in the White House as a clear insult to 1 billion world Muslims. He said: The Westerners do not consider an insult to 1 billion Muslims as an ugly and offensive act. Right from the outset, through Salman Rushdie, they have tried to insult Islam, Muslims and our beloved Prophet. This shows how far from fairness and righteousness are the criteria by which the ringleaders of global arrogance judge human rights issues. [passage omitted]

Interior Minister Views Security, Parties

NC0712213893 Beirut AL-SAFIR in Arabic 29 Nov 93 p 11

[Interview with Interior Minister 'Ali Mohammad Besharati by unidentified correspondent in Tehran; date not given]

[Excerpts] [AL-SAFIR] How do you view the situation in Iran? A number of crises have arisen with the outside world and there are refugees who have moved in large numbers into Iranian territories.

[Besharati] Like other concepts, security is a relative one. Security in our country is good. There are two sides to security: a permanent security and a circumstantial one. The permanent security does exist in our country by virtue of the noble determination of the ruling people and authority that are seeking to fulfill the people's security and stability ambitions. The circumstantial security concerns economic, social, political, and cultural issues that are changing. [passage omitted]

[AL-SAFIR] The state subsidies conflict with the recommendations of the World Bank, which is trying to repair relations with you. How can these conditions, which were imposed on many countries, be reconciled when the state's revenues have dropped?

[Besharati] You might be right about the World Bank but our fundamental concern is to serve the people. If we are asked to choose between getting the people's approval or that of the World Bank, we of course prefer the first. I do not agree with you that the state's revenues have dropped. The government sets and narrows the import range but the citizens do not feel this. You can fly over Bandar-e 'Abbas and see the number of ships bringing goods into our country. What do you want in Iran but can't find? The prices might be low or might be high but I have not heard so far that merchants are hoarding goods.

If you want to look at our economic situation through economic analyses, then it is natural that you will see that it is not a good one but we have gotten used to such words. We are now living in the aftermath of a long war that cost us too much.

You know that we have received between three and four million Afghans, Azeris, and Iraqis (2 million Afghans, 45,000 Azeris, and 7,000 Iraqis, who have just entered the country and joined the ones already here).

[AL-SAFIR] Political trends have started to evolve more and more. How are you dealing with the political struggle?

[Besharati] Freedom must develop. Writing on walls or in newspapers and other things that ensure the permanency of a rule are permissible. Citizens' would become violent if they could not express their views.

We could not express our views when we were in the university. We resorted to forming armed groups. This is our nature. Much has been said against us and against me personally during the past two weeks. All these articles were written by persons who were my friends. We sat, argued, and ate together but there were differences in our viewpoints. This is a healthy sign and is an advantage and not a liability. The problem arises when one party wants to impose its views on the others. We are not expecting any problems.

The westerners said 15 years ago that the Iranians turned against each other and that the internal armed groups had toughened their stances to the extent of attacking the imam (God's mercy be on h[illegible]). They compared him to the thread in a necklace; if it gets loose, then all the beads will fall off. You noticed, however, that the leadership changed but the people's cohesiveness and love did not.

[AL-SAFIR] Has the time come for parties to be formed?

[Besharati] This, coincidentally, concerns the Interior Ministry. We give permission to anyone who wants to establish any formation within the framework of the Islamic Constitution. We have so far 112 requests from organizations and have in fact issued 50 permits.

[AL-SAFIR] Are the requests from parties or societies?

[Besharati] If any group wants to get a license, then we are ready to study its request. There are the "Students Who Are Committed to the Imam's Policy" who have formed something like a party. They have their problems and stances and might be in conflict with the Foreign Ministry.

For 150 years the parties experiment here has not succeeded. The country went through several unsuccessful experiments. The citizens do not have good memories about parties. The citizens themselves are the reason for this failure. We in the Interior Ministry have the authority to issue the licenses. Our experts study the bylaws of every organization. We are not facing any problem.

[AL-SAFIR] Have you given licenses to any political parties?

[Besharati] There are at present two requests for parties. We are studying them and we will declare our stance in a few months.

[AL-SAFIR] Has the Islamic Republican Party been granted a license?

[Besharati] If they want to register it, we can do that. It has existed for 14 years and continues to exist but it does not conduct major activities. As I said, there are 112 organizations that have asked for licenses and action has only been taken on 50 of them. These organizations are of a political or social nature.

[AL-SAFIR] Are there requests from other parties?

[Besharati] I do not remember. But there is no problem. Bazargan has asked for a license for the "Iran Liberation Party." You may be surprised, but we have an open meeting every Monday where citizens can come to discuss their requests and problems.

President on Civic Improvements in Tehran

LD0312193493 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 1530 GMT 3 Dec 93

[Interview with President 'Ali Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani by an unidentified correspondent following the dedication of a bridge in Basij Square in Tehran on 3 December—recorded]

[Excerpts] [Correspondent] Today you inspected and opened a number of projects in south Tehran. Please let us know what the main characteristics of these plans are and what effects they will have on social conditions in Tehran.

[Hashemi-Rafsanjani] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. Today we visited a number of important projects near the municipal building in a corner of Tehran. The main reason for my visit was to thank the municipality for all the efforts that are carried out within the precincts of Tehran for improving the shape of the city. One of these projects is the great Afsariyyeh Bridge, which is a very important undertaking. [passage omitted]

The other project that I inspected was the modification of the buses of the Vahed Company so that they can run on gasoline, which they succeeded in doing by changing the engines of the buses. This was a very important step and to me it is a major project. I made sure that the inspection of these buses was part of my program today. This is important for a number of reasons. First of all, this leads to very good economizing in our foreign exchange expenses. At the moment, we are burning diesel oil in these buses. For each liter of diesel oil we spend more than 15 cents of foreign exchange, because at the moment we purchase diesel oil from abroad. Even if we do not have to purchase it, later we will be able to export it. We will use gasoline instead, and there is so much gasoline in our country that we will never face any fuel shortage for many hundreds of years.

From an environmental point of view, gasoline is a healthy fuel; first in Tehran and later in all cities. Later, we should gradually modify all trucks and other vehicles to use this. In any case, the engines that they have manufactured are very successful. Here, I wish to urge all the manufacturers and the users to take the issue of modifying the engines very seriously. It does not cost very much either. They told me that each bus costs between 3,000 to 3,500 dollars [as heard], and the modification also takes place inside the country. I also wish to thank the United Company for their good work. [passage omitted]

Another project that we inspected and where we are now is the great Khavaran cultural complex. Educated Basij youths with the help of the municipality are changing this area into a happy, Islamic cultural center. You know that all this area was a cemetery, Meskarabad cemetery and cemeteries of some religious minorities. According to the law, the cemeteries can no longer be allowed inside the city. They comprise hundreds of hectares of land in the busiest part of Tehran. It is being changed into a cultural center where children, young people, and all people can spend their spare time, spend their vacations, and receive instructions. [passage omitted]

Another project that we inspected is the electric buses that are being used on electrified routes. Recently, the United Company has succeeded in building a few prototypes in the country so that in the future we can manufacture electric buses in the country. At the moment all of them are imported. We also wish to thank them.

These were the projects that I inspected this morning. But here I should refer to a more basic issue for the people of Tehran. The municipality has some plans—and they are very important—to change the structure of south Tehran in such a way that life there will be equal to or even better than in north Tehran. There is no reason why we should have good conditions on the hills while the conditions are bad on the more level parts of Tehran.

One of the problems that existed there was the issue of traffic, which has been remedied by means of these wide roads, highways, and bridges. Another problem was pollution, which has been improved by moving offending plants to outside the city limits, which is better both for them and for the people. By doing this, noise, pollution, and density of population has been improved and has led to a reduction in traffic. There was also the issue of flooding, which caused a great deal of problems for the people in the southern part of the city. Now, by means of projects for diverting surface waters, which is being pursued with great speed in the south of the city—an example of which we saw in the square—the problem is being solved. The other problem was a lack of green spaces. However, now in the area that we are visiting they have increased the green area to 14 meters per person, while the world standard is 15 meters.

When these projects are carried out in any part of southern Tehran life will become very pleasant in this area; especially with the green belt that is being created south of here. Bibi Shahrbanu hills here have now been turned into woods.

I hope that with these projects we can turn Tehran into a city worth living in, even if it is crowded. Due to the position of the city on the slopes of Alborz, Tehran can be both a beautiful city as well as accommodating itself to the conditions of the era of machines. I wish for the greater success of the gentlemen who are doing all this work here.

Basij Official on Activities, Recruitment

LD0512135193

[Editorial Report] Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian at 0740 GMT on 5 December broadcast its 30-minute "Manifestations of Steadfastness" program which included an interview with Major Tala'i, the official in charge of student recruitment into the Basij Mobilization resistance forces, by an unidentified correspondent. The interview was 4 minutes long, the rest of the program comprised of songs and interviews with Basijis.

The correspondent begins by asking about the performance and organization of the student mobilization.

Major Tala'i replies: "In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful, and greetings to the honorable commander in chief of the Armed Forces. [passage omitted]

"After close coordination with the Education Ministry, a number of agreements were signed between the two organs of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps, the Basij Resistance Force, and the Education Ministry. Also, a joint set of rules and regulations were drawn and approved by the esteemed education minister and the commander of the Basij Resistance Forces, according to which at the beginning of the academic year 1992-1993 we began a project to expand the student mobilization at schools. On the basis of that project, we intend to recruit, both girls and boys, from all schools, high schools, and teacher training colleges.

"In that regard, God be praised, on the basis of the statistics available, at the end of the year 1371 [ending 20 March 1993] we were active in more than 10,000 schools which comprised 68 percent of all high schools, technical schools, and teacher training colleges, and in more than 44 percent of boys and girls schools. The student Basij has been set up in all those schools.

"Also, on the basis of the most recent statistics, as many as 1 million young students have been recruited in the student Basij from those 10,000 schools.

"Due to the shortage of facilities, and a number of financial and other problems, we have tried to slow down the recruitment and concentrate more on the preparation of the different ranks of the Basij Resistance Forces at schools, in order to improve their organization and efficiency."

Ayatollah Golpayegani in Hospital for Observation

NC0812063693 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0430 GMT 8 Dec 93

[Text] His Eminence Grand Ayatollah Golpayegani was taken to the intensive care unit of Shahid Raja'i Hospital last night for further medical observations. This was stated by Dr. Baher, who heads the team of doctors treating His Eminence Grand Ayatollah Golpayegani, to an IRNA correspondent this morning. He added: At midnight last night doctors treating his eminence transferred him to the intensive care unit for further observations after a deterioration in his breathing problem, and he is under observation now.

His Eminence Ayatollah Golpayegani was hospitalized yesterday at Shahid Raja'i Hospital because of acute pulmonary infection and shortness of breath.

President Meets Qatari Envoy, Views Oil Prices

LD0712120393 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1030 GMT 7 Dec 93

[Text] The new Qatari ambassador in Iran, Ahmad Bin-'Ali al-Afsari, was received this morning by President Hashemi-Rafsanjani for the submission of credentials.

During the meeting the president described the expansion of ties between the Islamic Republic of Iran and countries of the Persian Gulf region as significant for safeguarding stability and tranquillity in the region. He said: Thanks to the implementation of joint infrastructure projects, cooperation between the two countries is at desirable level, and these relations can be expanded further in the future.

Expressing regret for the fall in oil prices in the international market, Mr. Hashemi-Rafsanjani said: It is expected that the oil producing countries will deal more realistically with an issue on which the destiny of every one depends.

The Qatari ambassador conveyed greetings from his country's amir and crown prince to Mr. Hashemi-Rafsanjani and stressed the importance of the Islamic Republic's role as a big Islamic country in the region. He said: Qatar is ready to expand ties with Iran.

Reported Remarks of Turkey's Ciller Viewed

NC0512092093 Tehran JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI in Persian 17 Nov 93 p 2

[Unattributed commentary: "Who Should Make a Denial?"]

[Text] Recently Radio Ankara carried reports about a meeting between Borujerdi, deputy foreign minister of the Islamic Republic of Iran, and Turkish Prime Minister Tansu Ciller. According to these reports, Ciller told the Iranian official: "Turkey wants the Islamic Republic of Iran to participate in joint operations inside the borders of Islamic Iran against Kurdish guerrillas from Turkey. Otherwise, the Turkish Government will act officially on its own."

Following the publication of this impudent remark, JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI contacted the foreign minister and asked for a confirmation of this report. A ministry official confirmed that this report was correct.

Since Turkish Prime Minister Ciller's impudent statement should not go unanswered, JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI warned the Turkish prime minister to "stay on her own turf" and explained that even though these remarks by Ciller were meant for "domestic consumption," since they were stated during an official visit she should be strictly warned to recognize her limits and not to do something that will add to the already numerous problems.

Foreign Minister Velayati later denied the issue and pointed out that "this report was completely false and no such thing was ever said"!

It should be pointed out that the esteemed foreign minister should inform the press circles in his ministry who are in charge of publishing, confirming, or denying reports of what is going on so that something that is said by a ministry official is not denied by the minister the next day.

Moreover, as a matter of principle, it is the Turkish Foreign Ministry and the Turkish Government or, at least, the Turkish Embassy in Tehran that should deny this report if it is false. Naturally, their silence on this is an implicit confirmation. Even though it is the Foreign Ministry's duty to issue an official reply, the press—as the explicit mouthpiece of the nation—cannot remain indifferent toward the babblings of others.

Turkey Urged To View Regime More 'Realistically'

NC0312130993 (Clandestine) Voice of Iranian Kordestan in Persian 1730 GMT 26 Nov 93

[Unattributed commentary]

[Text] Iranian-Turkish relations during the rule of the clerical regime in Iran have been full of ups and downs. Having done its best to normalize its relations with the clerical regime, the Turkish Government has often showed—despite problems in bilateral relations—that these problems are temporary and can be solved through meetings and talks with Iranian officials. The Turkish Government has never denied that the clerical regime interfered in Turkey's domestic affairs and encouraged extremist Islamic groups in Turkey to resort to mischief and to upset the situation and the security of Turkish citizens.

As well as intervening in Turkey's domestic affairs, the clerical regime is at loggerheads with Turkey on many issues. The two governments have different tastes and views on various regional and world issues. The only issue—or one of the outstanding issues—on which both regimes share the same view and approach is the Kurdish problem in the Middle East and, once every few months, the foreign ministers of Iran, Turkey, and Syria meet to discuss this problem and to compile various plans and programs to confront the Kurdish people.

Even though there are issues in relations between the clerical regime and Turkey on which both countries may have similar views and approaches, the solution of the problems does not seem simple, because the problems between these two governments are numerous and significant, especially when one of these problems is the clerical regime's intervention in Turkey's domestic affairs.

Often, the Turkish Government has arrested members of extremist Islamic groups perpetrating subversive acts. Investigation has clarified that these people were hired by the clerical regime and it has been further clarified just where in Iran and in which intelligence center they trained.

Of course, each time the officials of the regime of hypocrites and sly clergymen meet and talk with Turkish officials, they do not attend to such issues and [words indistinct] and claim, with the hypocrisy that is an exclusive trait of the clergymen, that they want to strengthen their relations with Turkey and that they do not want to interfere in its domestic affairs.

No doubt the Turkish Government is sufficiently aware that the clerical regime is instigating extremist Islamic and subversive groups in Turkey and has undeniable documents and facts to prove this. It also knows that the

clerical regime is insincere in its relations with the Turkish Government. But it does not adopt a decisive stance against it; it only criticizes and [words indistinct].

Now, either the Turkish Government does not know the nature of the clerical regime and does not know that if it shows patience toward it the clergymen will intensify their subversive and irresponsible acts or it is incapable of confronting the clerical regime. Otherwise, the outcome of the recent meeting between the clerical regime's Deputy Foreign Minister Borujerdi and Turkish officials, during which several clear examples of Iran's involvement in Turkey's domestic affairs and the clerical regime's instigation of Turkey's extremist Islamic groups were given to him, would have been that [words indistinct] Turkish officials and the clerical regime's foreign minister would be forced to meet and Turkey would demand for the umpteenth time that Iran stop interfering in its domestic affairs.

If the Turkish Government believes that the clerical regime's intervention in Turkey's domestic affairs is limited to only one case and that it pursues a short-term objective, it is very mistaken. The clerical regime covets Turkey and (?intends)—to continue its [word indistinct] policy—to strengthen the pro-Iranian extremist Islamic groups in Turkey and impose a regime similar to the Iranian regime on the Turkish people or, at least, to create more chaos in Turkey.

But despite these problems, unfortunately, Turkey seeks the clerical regime's cooperation to crush the Kurdish people in their country. That regime, in addition to being the enemy of the Kurdish people and their rights and freedoms, is also an enemy of regional security and is creating chaos and unrest for the Turkish people and country within the framework of this policy and behavior. But the Turkish people and nation should see things more realistically. They should recognize the clerical regime for what it is and confront it on this basis.

Foreign Ministry Opens Office in Tabriz

NC0812090693 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0330 GMT 8 Dec 93

[Text] An office representing the Foreign Ministry was opened yesterday and started official operations at a ceremony in the presence of Foreign Minister Velayati and local officials.

The Central News Unit reports that in his remarks at the ceremony, Velayati said that this office was deemed necessary in view of the increase in trade and tourism and the expansion of relations between the Islamic Republic of Iran and the newly-independent countries in the north, especially Azerbaijan. He expressed hopes that with the opening of this office, the necessary facilities will be extended as far as contacts with the neighboring countries are concerned.

With the establishment of the Foreign Ministry office in Tabriz, all consular, student, cultural, economic, and travel affairs of the provinces of East Azerbaijan, West Azerbaijan, and Ardebil will be tended to on the spot and people will no longer have to apply to Tehran for these transactions.

Pakistan

National Assembly Discusses Nuclear Policy

Nawaz Sharif, Others Begin Debate

BK0712150193 Islamabad PTV Television Network in English 1400 GMT 7 Dec 93

[Text] The National Assembly today started discussions on the nuclear policy of the government. Initiating the debate, the leader of the opposition, Mian Mohammad Nawaz Sharif, said the nuclear issue relates to the security and independence of the country, and there could be no compromise on it. He asked the government to take the nation and parliament into confidence on the issue. He said the nuclear program is a question of life and death for the country, and we would do our outmost to defend it. There is national consensus on the issue, and political differences could not come in its way. In a written speech, Mian Mohammad Nawaz Sharif hoped that the debate in the National Assembly would prove decisive in deciding how to handle the vital security interest of the country. He said the nuclear capability was imperative for the country's defense, and it should be kept as number one priority. He said various proposals were made in the past to declare South Asia free of nuclear proliferation but these were rejected by India. The opposition leader alleged that the government is trying to roll back the nuclear program.

Participating in the debate, Professor M.G. Khan of Pakistan People's Party rejected the allegations made by the leader of the opposition and said he was trying to mislead the people. He said Pakistan People's Party has never compromised on the nuclear issue and the leader of the opposition wanted to use the issue for political gains. He said the speech of the opposition leader was full of hypocrisy, conjectures, and accusations, and contained no substance. He quoted a number of interviews of the prime minister expressing categorical commitment to carry on the nuclear programs without any compromise. Mr. M.G. Khan said the Pakistan People's Party had to pay a heavy price for the country's nuclear programs.

The others members who participated in the debate in the morning session included the federal minister for social welfare and special education, Dr. Sher Afghan; Mian Abdul Waheed; Arbab Mohammad Jahangir Khan; Maulana Azam Tarik; Mr. Ejajul Haque; Syed Khurshid Ahmad Shah; Mr. Dost Mohammad Zaidi; Mr. Khaled Ahmad Kharal; Mian Mohammad Yasin Khan Wattoo; Mir Zafarullah Khan Jamali; Syed Iftikar

Hussain Jilani; Arbab Ghulam Rahim; Haji Mohammad Nawaz Khokar; and Mr. Ghulam Akbar Maqsi.

Further on Nawaz Sharif's Comments

BK0812090393 Islamabad THE NATION in English 8 Dec 93 pp 1, 11

[Text] Islamabad (PPI) - Leader of the Opposition in the National Assembly and President of the Pakistan Muslim League PML(N) Mohammad Nawaz Sharif Tuesday [7 December] alleged that the government is contemplating to roll back the nuclear programme and has almost agreed to allow the international inspection of the nuclear installations.

Initiating discussion on the nuclear policy of the government in the National Assembly, Mohammad Nawaz Sharif also alleged that the government is also shifting historic stand on the Kashmir issue.

The PML President declared that his party will not allow the government to compromise on nuclear programme and Kashmir.

He said "People's Party always has been prepared to divide the country for power. We relinquish power for the sake of the country. He said Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto not only capped the nuclear programme but also made in controversial in the world. [sentence as published] "She is moving towards such a destination where her ultimate objective will be roll back and complete end of the nuclear programme," added Mohammad Nawaz Sharif who read out his 11 page written speech in the House.

Nawaz Sharif recalled when his government was in power, all aid to Pakistan has already stopped under the Pressler Amendment. "However, we did not care about it and a year passed. When it was proved that Pakistan can carry on without this aid, we were accused of being terrorist and the daily reports in those days hinted that Pakistan might be declared a terrorist state, the next week and the pressure was exerted on Pakistan." He said Pakistan had never been a terrorist state. "In fact we were the victims of terrorism."

He said Kashmir is a disputed area and America and our other friends accept it a dispute and the struggle of the Kashmiris was the movement for the right of self-determination. [sentence as published]

Continuing, Nawaz Sharif said Pakistan was not fighting in Kashmir, then "why were were being threatened. It was aimed at pressurising Pakistan for obvious reasons. We did not bow before any pressure after which a new storm was created internally to dislodge us." He said the whole nation has seen when a conspiracy was complete against our government, the enemies of Pakistan rejoiced. The government, he said was struggling for the sovereignty and security of the country. He said had we sacrificed our national interest there would have been no pressure on us. In the international politics even the diplomatic smile has a price. Nothing is earned free in the world but he questioned why there were sudden blessings on them and what price was paid.

Nawaz Sharif said for the politicians power has always been a big thing but powers must not be achieved by putting the country at stake. International domination after conceding the basic right has no value. He said "The present Prime Minister in December 1992 tried to create difficulty for us in the nuclear programme when were in power. "A deliberate attempt was made to convince certain friends that she could be useful to them." In October 1993, she gave an interview to the Indian Magazine India Today in which Benazir Bhutto gave an impression that she was not in favour of the armed struggle of the Kashmiri freedom Fighters and labelled them as terrorists. He said he was saying this with heavy heart that when the present government was in the opposition, she tried to create problems for Pakistan just for the sake of power, and when she is in power, she is sowing the seeds of thorns which the coming generation in Pakistan will not be able to overcome." Nawaz Sharif further questioned as to why the Prime Minister tried to instigate other forces. He said when the Prime Minister is out of power, she instigates the foreign powers against Pakistan's nuclear programme and when she is in power, she tries to make the nuclear programme disputed.

Nawaz Sharif said "I am seeing that the present government's stand on the country's concept has gone a change. What kind of Pakistan it would be without the nuclear capability and self-sufficiency. Undoubtedly Pakistan will be a lacky of others and this policy is not only apparent in the nuclear fields but also it is very much forthcoming in the Kashmir problem."

The PML chief said he wanted to put some basic questions whether it was just an accident that immediately after the formation of PPP government in Pakistan, the Indian soldiers surrounded the Hazratbal Mosque and hurt the sentiments of the Kashmiris and the entire Muslim world and then after lifting the siege, an effort was made to prove that they did not want to go to extreme.

He said the report about the struggle waged by the Kashmiris in held-Valley were deliberately ignored on PTV [Pakistan TV] to paint a picture in the world that we are not even mentioning about the Kashmiris movement on PTV.

Nawaz Sharif said our government with great labour and difficulty had made Kashmir an international dispute but the PPP government by stopping a resolution against the violation of human rights of Kashmiris tried to keep Kashmir away from the international scene. He said the Kashmiris giving their lives and honour had made Kashmir an international problem but after accepting the two sides' position, the government had destroyed the case. He said it has always been endeavour of India to make Kashsmir a bilateral issue instead of an international issue.

He said an announcment was made that on January 1, 1994, the two countries will hold talks on Kashmir. This, he said was a deliberate attempt to give time to India to crush the Kashmiris. The day this bargain was done the Indian army had stepped up their attacks on the freedom fighters so as to enlarge the killings of the innocent people. The BBC television and other foreign media has amply shown that the Indian army indulged in mass killing in Sopore, he added.

Now, he said, the government was helping the Kashmiris in such a way that it is not even mentioning the mass killings in the Valley who do not know that there will be an intensity in the killings in the state in the days to come.

The PML President maintained "The whole nation asks you as to how you will hold talks with Indians busy in the massacre of the Kashmiris. Had you succeeded in stopping the killings, we would have acknowledged it as your success."

He said under the present circumstances the international world will get an impression that India had agreed to solve the Kashmir dispute through negotiations and everything will be all right soon. He questioned whether the government had deviated from the Pakistan's historic stand on Kashmir and adopted a new stand which is contrary to Pakistan's interests. "Whether these early and frquent indications and blessings were meant to accept others point of view on Kashmir." He said if India could be given privilege without taking the people and parliament of Pakistan into confidence, he was confident that the same thing was done on the nuclear issue.

Foreign Minister: No Rollback of Program

BK0812091993 Islamabad THE NATION in English 8 Dec 93 pp 1, 11

[Text] Islamabad—Foreign Minister Sardar Asif Ahmad Ali on Tuesday [7 December] disclosed in the National Assembly that Pakistan had acquired nuclear capability but it does not intend to make a nuclear device.

Winding up the one-day debate on the nuclear issue he said, "There was no question of rolling back Pakistan's peaceful nuclear programme and no government could dare to change the peaceful nuclear programme".

He strongly criticised the Indian stance on the nuclear issue and said, "It had a proliferation record and it keeps on changing its stance on the issue". He said the massive armed buildup like nuclear subs aircraft carriers and the experiment of Prithvi missile, which is capable of taking along nuclear bomb, clearly reflected its proliferation designs.

The Foreign Minister, who was not happy over taking up of nuclear issue in the National Assembly by the Opposition, said it was most inappropriate time to take up such a sensitive issue in the National Assembly when Pakistan was already facing criticism on the nuclear programme. He said he had already issued a detailed statement over the nuclear policy of the country. He asked if nuclear issue was ever discussed in India, South Africa and Israel.

Sardar Asif, who was impressive without being acrimonious, said the forum for indepth discussion on the nuclear issue was the Standing Committee of the House on Foreign Affairs. He said by taking up this sensitive matter in the National Assembly the Opposition did not serve the country, rather it pleased the enemies of the country who wanted to know about our secrets.

He said four different governments handled Pakistan's nuclear programme. He said he considered every member of the House a patriot and loyal to the country. While referring Dr Qadeer Khan's interview to Kaldeep Nayar, he said a kind of hysteria was whipped up all of a sudden by a journalist, now the main strategist of the PML (N) [Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz], when he took the Indian journalist to AQ Khan for an interview which had caused great damage to the country.

When Sardar Asif started disclosing misdeeds and failures of the Nawaz government on nuclear and foreign affairs the Opposition members raised alarms and the proceedings remained suspended for a while. However, continuing his speech, Sardar Asif said Pakistan stood by the struggling Kashmiris in the hour of their trial. He said it was the successful diplomacy of Benazir government that compelled India to discuss all aspects of the Kashmir.

He said during his talks with the India Foreign Minister at Dhaka he told him that Hazratbal siege in Held Kashmir had not been lifted. He said he also told him that instead of improving the ground situation in Held Kashmir they had increased repression there. He said he told him about the Indian troops, brutality in the Occupied valley and the killing of 200 innocent Kashmiris in Sopor. While highlighting his government's successes to mobilise Kashmir issue in international forums he said Pakistan withheld its resolution on Kashmir in the [word indistinct] Committee of the UN General Assembly but had reserved the right to move it any time it so chooses.

He said Nawaz Sharif in February 1993 had given his directive [word indistinct] a resolution on Kashmir in the commission for Human Rights should not be moved. He said even the Indian Prime Minister through a letter had rejected Nawaz Sharif's dialogue offer. Was this a success of their foreign policy? [punctuation as published] he asked.

He said Pakistan had achieved a breakthrough at the Commonwealth Summit at Cyprus where several heads of state assured their support on Kashmir.

He said Nawaz Sharif's foreign policy isolated the country in the world and Pakistan's relations with China, Saudi Arabia and the UAE had become tense.

He said the former Prime Minister and been running the foreign policy of the country from Model Town and had no idea about foreign affairs and foreign policy.

Bhutto on Nuclear Position, Ties With U.S.

BK0712144293 Islamabad PTV Television Network in English 1400 GMT 7 Dec 93

[Text] The prime minister Ms. Benazir Bhutto has said there will be no roll back of our peaceful nuclear program. Talking informally to journalists in Islamabad today, she answered a number of questions, including those on the nuclear issue and the Pakistan-American relations.

[Begin Bhutto recording] With the United States, we have also started a two-way dialogue to see how the two countries can overcome the problem that has arisen in their relationship. We cannot roll back [the nuclear program] and this is the position we have tried to explain to the United States that we cannot roll back. At the same time, we have explained to the United States that we support nonproliferation and we seek to have a peaceful nuclear program and so long as there is no threat to our security, our program will continue to be peaceful.

We feel that the Pressler Amendment is unjustified because it is not only discriminatory, but it does not serve the purpose of regional nonproliferation. In fact, it is a veto in Indian hands.

So, we are trying to pull Pakistan out of international isolation. We are trying to put Kashmir in its proper perspective and we are trying to put the Pressler Amendment in its proper perspective. Obviously, this is not liked by the opposition because our achievements only highlight their failure, and, so, they are kicking up a big dust about a non-issue. [end recording]

China's Li Ruihuan Arrives in Lahore

BK0712112093 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Overseas Service in English 0800 GMT 7 Dec 93

[Text] The chairman of the National Committee of Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference, Mr. Li Ruihuan, was given a warm reception on his arrival in Lahore this morning for a two-day visit to the provincial capital. Those who received him at the airport included the acting Punjab governor retired Lieutenant General Mohammad Iqbal, speaker of the Punjab Assembly Mr. Mohammad Hanif Ramey, provincial ministers, advisers, and elected representatives. The Chinese leader, who is accompanied by a 57-member delegation, drove to the mazhar [mausoleum] of Allama Mohammad Iqbal. He placed a wreath on the mazhar and stood in silence as a mark of respect for the national poet of Pakistan. The Chinese delegation also visited the historic Badshahi masjid [mosque] and the fort. He was impressed by the architectural grandeur of the two monuments.

Leaves Lahore for Karachi

BK0812064293 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 0600 GMT 8 Dec 93

[Text] Li Ruihuan, chairman of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference, was accorded a warm send-off when he left Lahore for Karachi this morning after a two-day stay in the provincial capital. Acting Punjab Governor Lieutenant General Mohammad Iqbal and Chief Minister Mian Manzur Ahmad Wattoo bade farewell to Li Ruihuan, who is accompanied by his delegation members and Senate Chairman Wasim Sajjad.

Defense Loan Agreement With PRC Welcomed

BK0712101393 Rawalpindi JANG in Urdu 7 Dec 93 p 3

[Editorial: "The Chinese Loan for Defense Purchases"]

[Text] Pakistan and the PRC have signed an agreement under which China will extend loan facilities to Pakistan for defense purchases. Undoubtedly, China has been a reliable friend of Pakistan, which ignored all political considerations and stood by Pakistan in every hour of trial. Even at a time when rapid political and economic changes are taking place in the international arena, forcing countries to change their policies and priorities correspondingly, Pakistan-China friendship has not only remained totally unaffected but has grown stronger and stronger. The aforesaid agreement will play a very important role in further enhancing this friendship and cooperation. On the one hand, Pakistan has been facing difficulties in securing military assistance due to unilateral and inequitable U.S. restrictions. While on the other, India is equipping its armed forces with modern weapons, thereby disrupting the balance of power in South Asia. Moreover, it is not possible for Pakistan to fully meet its defense needs due to abnormally high price of weapons in the open market and the country's insufficient foreign reserves. Therefore, the sale of defense equipment by China and provision of loan for this purpose will greatly help in strengthening Pakistan's defense.

Nusrat Bhutto: I am Still PPP Chairperson

BK0712103593 Islamabad THE NATION in English 7 Dec 93 pp 1,4

[Report by Hassan Mansoor]

[Text] Karachi—Her ouster from the coveted slot of party Chairperson by a bunch of the members of the Central Executive Committee (CEC) on Sunday [5 December] was a setback for Begum Nusrat Bhutto, which was apparent when she angrily said: "No one has the power to oust me from the said slot including Central Executive Committee of the party as I was duly nominated on the same seat by late Z.A. Bhutto in 1978 for life."

"I am still the Chairperson of the PPP and I don't accept any symbolic slot like Patron-in-Chief. There is no such office in a political party in the whole world, she said. Those members of the CEC of the PPP are not competent to decide my fate. "I am the PPP Chief as before," she claimed.

Addressing a hurriedly-called press conference at 70 Clifton here on Monday, the ousted PPP Chairperson deplored the decision and asked as to why she should accept that decision of the CEC, when she was not even invited duly by the Committee's karta dhartas to attend that. "I was deliberately kept ignorant so that any possibility of resistance from my side could be rubbed off. Some had told me that there was something being cooked for my ouster from the chairpersonship and I have been hearing this for a number of days before and the day has come after all," she added.

Begum Nusrat Bhutto alleged that Ms Nahid Khan, Private Secretary to newly-elected Chairperson of the PPP, Benazir Bhutto and Safdar Abbasi, son of ex Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly, had masterminded the whole conspiracy. What a pity that the Premier believes more in [word indistinct] than her own mother. She should have thought for a moment on the whole thing before taking such a crucial step, she said while sobbing.

Begum Bhutto said Safdar Abbasi had hatched that conspiracy only because of his brother Manawar Abbasi's defeat against Murtaza Bhutto, "He wanted to avenge this and he did that at last." Except three all the leaders of the PPP in the present set-up of the party are political criminals. They have been acting as touts for dictator Ziaul Haq and their hands are stained with the blood of martyrs', and our Prime Minister is surrounded by them. Not only that but she has trusted more in them than the well-wishers of the party. I have proofs that Iqbal Haider, who now happens to be a Federal Minister, had distributed sweets, when my husband Z.A. Bhutto was killed by Zia regime."

All of them including Benazir Bhutto feared that maybe, the real heir of the late Bhutto replace her and become the Chairman of the party. [sentence as published] I had also wanted the same, but Murtaza Bhutto was not interested in that coveted slot. What can be said more about that while I am shocked.

Regarding the future strategy, Begum Nusrat Bhutto said she would devise her future strategy after duly consulting with honest and genuine workers and leaders of the party. "I don't want any support in the Assemblies but only in the masses as they are the real heir of the late founder of the PPP and by the blessing of Allah we enjoy this support of our people," she said. Adding "we don't want murderers and criminals within the party ranks and will strive for cleansing the PPP from such crows."

She reiterated that the late Bhutto had nominated her the Chairperson and it was his decision. "I don't want to throw in the dustbin the decision of my husband. I will never allow anyone to do this ugly job and no one can dare topple me."

She denied that her son-in-law Asir Ali Zardari was behind what had happened.

When asked if the present members of the CEC were nominated after her approval being a PPP Chairperson, she said he has been kept ignorant of any crucial matter regarding taking the crucial decision regarding the party's policy, including nomination of the CEC members, distribution of the election tickets and nomination of the office-bearers throughout the country. "These decisions used to be taken in closed-door meeting without my knowledge and I used to avoid that due to my courteous nature," she said.

Commenting on the meeting in which she was ousted, she said. "They allege that I had worked for Murtaza during the October general elections. I just ask those people who is Murtaza. He is son of late Bhutto, their mentor. I worked for him not for the son of general Ziaul Haq."

When asked whether she had any regrets regarding nomination of Benazir Bhutto as he Co-Chairperson by her, she said: "I am really regretting now. I should not have given her my powers. I should have retained all those powers with myself."

She said there had been no democracy in the party. The leadership did not believe in the elections within the rank and files and only rely on nominations. "Why not democracy in the party, when they used to demand democracy in the country. They only go to the masses for votes and when they succeed, they lock their doors adn do what they like against the betterment of the people."

"Murtaza's support is not a reason. It is not a serious charge against me for which I have been overthrown by them. However, I am not in a mood to take any legal action against them. "First, I will pursue the loyalists of late Bhutto and sort out the whole strategy for the future," Begum Bhutto said.

She said she would go to Islamabad soon and would watch what is the attitude of the party's" "well-wishers" towards her. "I will stay and continue to act as Chairperson, no matter if they put me behind the bars," she declared. "The decision is illegal as no one can expel the Chairperson, nor replace her."

The mother of the Prime Minister said she would seriously consider the dissolution of the present Central Executive Committee and would discuss the matter with the genuine PPP founders and leaders in this respect.

Editorial Views PPP 'War of Succession'

BK0712111593 Islamabad THE NATION in English 7 Dec 93 p 6

[Editorial: "PPP's War of Succession"]

[Text] The 'crowning' of Benazir Bhutto as the Chairperson of the Peoples Party has at long last taken place. She had to wait for fourteen long years to inherit the last remaining 'prize title' that her further had chosen for himself in 1967 to project his image as a new breed of leader a la Mao's China. In practical terms, even as Co-chairperson, she has been the ultimate party boss ever since Begum Nusrat Bhutto had abdicated her political authority to let her daughter run the party. The PPP Central Executive Committee (CEC) decision to elevate Benazir Bhutto as the Party Chairperson may have only formalised the de facto arrangement, but its potential for causing rumblings in the party over the substance as much as the method used should not be underestimated, particularly in Sindh and amongst the party's rank and file generally. No matter how smooth the 'transfer of title' may have appeared as the handpicked members of the CEC gave their 'unanimous' backing to Benazir Bhutto's move, the eventful decision was indicative of the unmanageable proportions the split in the Bhutto clan has assumed. To remove Begum Nursat Bhutto from the Party leadership, however ceremonial her office may have been, is a desperate act and, whether or not it leads to a major split in the party ranks, it is bound to damage Benazir's image, particularly when in-house fighting' terms into an open war, among members of the Bhutto family for scieing the party. Benazir Bhutto is, no doubt, poised to emerge victorious in the 'war of succession', but she may have to pay a heavy price for parting comspany with no less a person than her own mother and by inference, her brother.

Ever since Murtaza Bhutto's gameplan to storm his way into the political arena was revealed, Begum Nusrat Bhutto has been in a fix. Unable to draw a line between her 'political priorities' and 'motherly affection', She has even made no secret of her desire to install her son as the legitimate heir of ZA Bhutto. Benazir may have made a preemptive strike in anticipation of a move to bring in Murtaza into the PPP leadership from the back door. In any case, she has clearly brought the message home that she is willing to go to any extent to safeguard her undisputed leadership of the party regardless of who she has to fight and at what cost. Interestingly, Benazir Bhutto has of late been trying to outgrow the image of a mere ZAB successor making a conscious effort to project herself as a leader in her own right. Her unsentimental 'coup' inside the party may have been prompted by the urge to override contention by rival claimants to ZAB's legacy, but it remains to be seen whether she can manage to rid herself of the enduring bondage to dynastic politics, and seek political support on the basis of her government's performance. Benazir, regardless of whatever leverage she had as the daughter of ZA Bhutto, has during the past decade personally led nurmerous political campaigns giving a creditable account of her leadership qualities. Yet, howsoever well-merited her elevation to Chairpersonship may be, questions about elections in the party at all levels, including its head, will have to be institutionalised and properly regulated if future feuds and infighting are to be avoided.

Sri Lanka

Army Chief Resigns; 'Power Struggle' Noted

BK0412120893 Hong Kong AFP in English 0916 GMT 4 Dec 93

[Text] COLOMBO, Dec 4 (AFP)—Sri Lanka's army chief Cecil Waidyaratne has resigned five months ahead of his scheduled retirement, official sources said Sunday.

Lieutenant General Waidyaratne, 55, sent in his retirement papers amid growing rivalry within the military hierachy and a series of debacles at the hands of separatist Tamil Tiger guerrillas, the sources said.

Appointed army chief in November 1991, he will now retire at the end of the month rather than continue his full term that was due to end in May next year.

The army suffered its worst setbacks at the hands of the rebel Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) in the past two years, losing virtually the entire armouries at least three camps in the north of the country.

He was credited widely, however, with successfully putting down a violent uprising by anti-government Sinhalese militants between 1988 and 1990.

A power struggle developed between moderates and hardliners in the military entrusted with the campaign against the LTTE, which is battling to establish an independent Tamil homeland in Sri Lanka's northeast since 1972.

Waidyaratne was criticised recently by local media organisations over his alleged threats against a columnist of a weekend newspaper.

Air Force Bombs Suspected LTTE Base

BK0612141093 Hong Kong AFP in English 1302 GMT 6 Dec 93

[Text] Colombo, Dec 6 (AFP)—Airforce planes bombed and destroyed a suspected sea base of Tamil Tiger guerrillas in northern Sri Lanka, with Tamil sources Monday [6 December] claiming 26 civilians were killed during the raids.

Bombers destroyed a "Sea-Tiger" base of the rebel Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) located at Gurunagar in the Jaffna peninsula Sunday, a military official here said, adding that casualties were not immediately known.

However, travellers from the region told reporters at the northernmost government-held town of Vavuniya that 26 civilians, including a deaf woman, were killed and more than 70 wounded when aircraft pounded three locations at Gurunagar over the weekend.

Earlier reports had said at least 20 civilians were killed.

Security forces had stepped up aerial strikes in Jaffna and elsewhere in the LTTE-held northern Sri Lanka after the rebels destroyed a key military base on the southern flank of Jaffna nearly a month ago.

In the immediate aftermath of the LTTE assault on the Pooneryn military complex on November 11, the government admitted that the airforce had accidently bombed a church and a government building in Jaffna.

Tamil sources said the LTTE was operating a faster boat service between the Jaffna peninsula and the northern mainland of the country after dislodging a navy facility at Pooneryn.

All other land routes to Jaffna have been blocked by the Tigers and security forces for strategic reasons. Civilians are forced to use the LTTE ferry to travel to the peninsula across the prohibited waterway of the Jaffna lagoon.

The sources said that two of the four boats the Tigers captured during the Pooneryn military complex attack were now deployed to provide protection to the boat service. LTTE women were manning the former navy craft.

Tigers are leading a guerrilla campaign to establish an independent Tamil homeland in Sri Lanka's northern and eastern regions where the two million Tamil minority is concentrated.